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STUARTS

Uncover the incredible story of a dynasty torn apart by civil war

THE HEROES AND VILLAINS OF A UNIFIED BRITAIN

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FIFTH EDITION

TREASON ◆ KING KILLERS ◆ EXILE ◆ RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

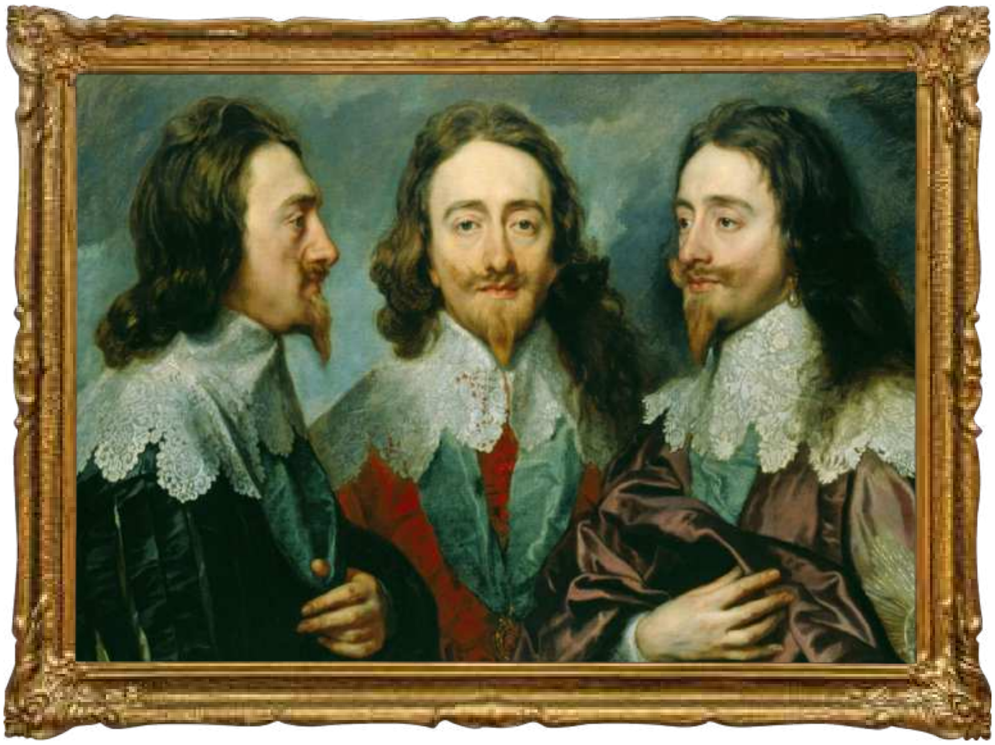
Welcome to

ALL ABOUT HISTORY
Book of the

STUARTS

The axeman lifted his weapon and paused, assessing the bare neck before him. In one swift movement, he dealt the fatal blow, severing the head of his own king. As the life drained from Charles I, so too did the bitter dregs of absolute monarchism in Britain. After centuries of kings and queens, from the bloodthirsty to the benevolent, England became a republic, with Oliver Cromwell at the helm. But history wasn't finished with the Stuarts.

In barely more than a century, the Stuarts shaped Britain irrevocably. Ruling during the Great Fire of London, the devastating plague outbreak of 1665 and numerous religious plots and schemes, the Stuarts overcame catastrophe and conspiracy to unite Scotland and England into a European superpower. In the All About History Book of the Stuarts, discover how the Scottish dynasty ascended the English throne, uncover why a king met his maker at the executioner's block and find out why life was miserable under Cromwell. Elsewhere, read about the Restoration, delve into the dynastic disputes that cost a king his crown and learn about the royal schemes to reclaim a usurped throne.



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Future PLC Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA

Bookazine Editorial
Editor **Philippa Grafton**
Designer **Ali Innes**
Compiled by **Charles Ginger & Phil Martin**
Senior Art Editor **Andy Downes**
Head of Art & Design **Greg Whitaker**
Editorial Director **Jon White**

Magazine Editorial
Editor **Jonathan Gordon**
Art Editor **Kym Winters**
Staff Writer **Jessica Leggett**
Editor in Chief **Tim Williamson**
Senior Art Editor **Duncan Cook**

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Media packs are available on request
Commercial Director **Clare Dove**

International
Head of Print Licensing **Rachel Shaw**
licensing@futurenet.com
www.futurecontenthub.com

Circulation
Head of Newstrade **Tim Mathers**

Production
Head of Production **Mark Constance**
Production Project Manager **Matthew Eglinton**
Advertising Production Manager **Joanne Crosby**
Digital Editions Controller **Jason Hudson**
Production Managers **Keely Miller, Nola Cokely,**
Vivienne Calvert, Fran Twentyman

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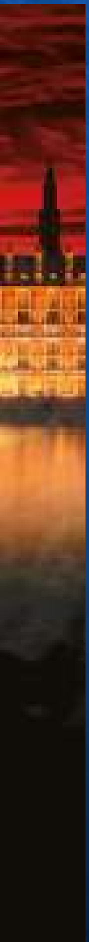

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Birth of a dynasty

From retainers to sovereigns, the Stuart family ruled Scotland for centuries before they gained a greater prize – the throne of England

The royal house of Stuart is one of the most enduring and conflicting in British history. They propelled Scotland, a country on the outskirts of western life and politics, onto the European centre stage, where a dramatic turn of events saw them take the throne of England after the Tudor dynasty faded away.

A common and sometimes confusing trait with the Stuarts, and many other royal families, is the repetition in their naming conventions. James and Mary are the most popular names, with monarchs often only differentiated by their place in the reigning order.

Hailing from 11th-century Brittany, the Norman ancestors of the Stuart line came to Britain under King Henry I of England. Alan fitz Flaad served as a knight under the king and gained castles, wealth and power. His son, Walter Fitzalan, was invited to Scotland under David I to serve as his High Steward. The name of Stuart, sometimes spelt Stewart to denote the Scottish line of the family, would be derived from this job title, with the name meaning 'hall ward' in old English, possibly dated from before the 7th century.

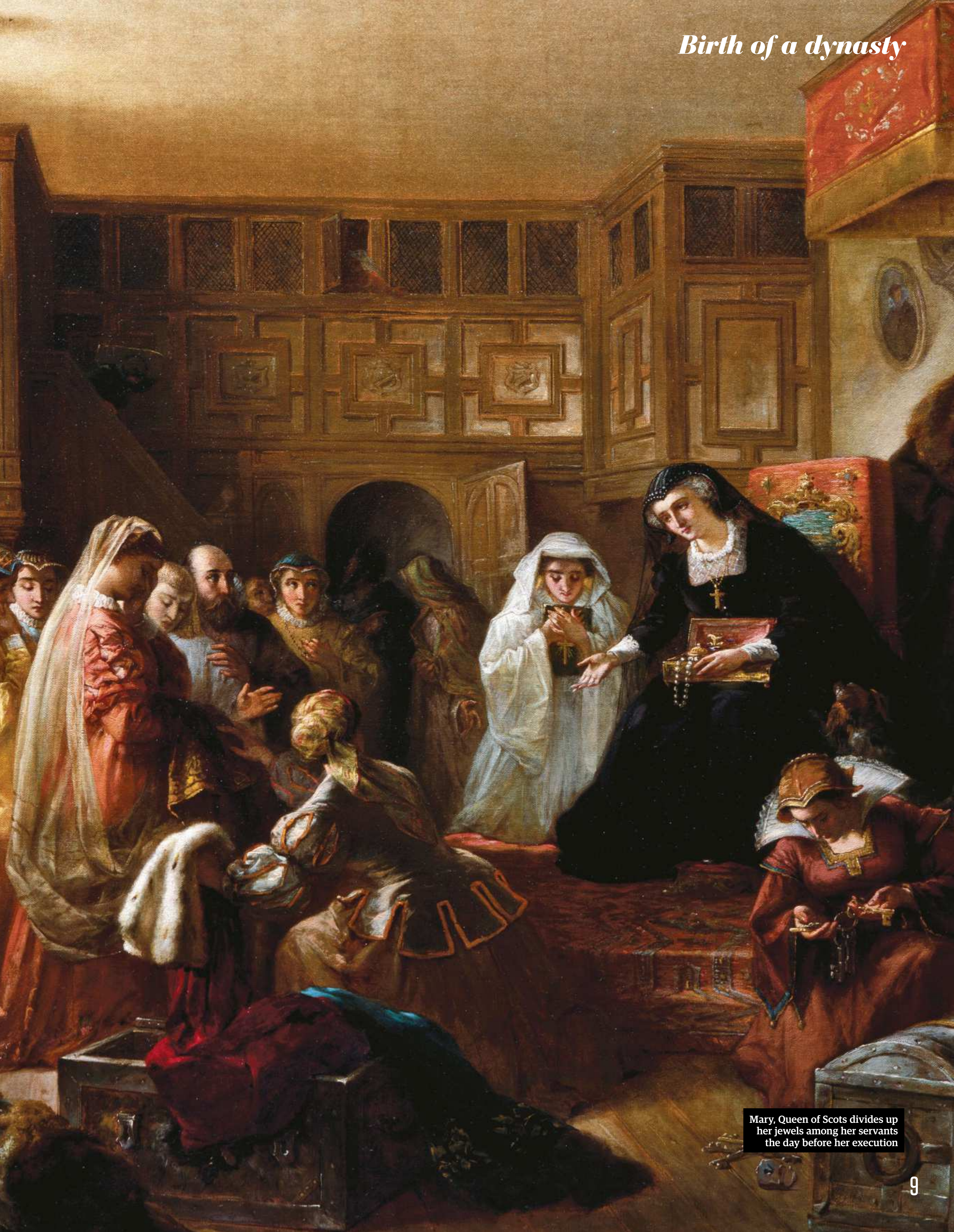
Being a member of an Anglo-Norman household, Walter would have brought his expertise in European warfare to the Scottish court, including motte and bailey castles and the heavily armoured shock cavalry that the Normans favoured. This new military clout enabled Walter and his family to exert royal control over the more rebellious northeast and southeast regions of the country. This position soon became hereditary and Walter's great-grandson would take their title as the family name. Thus the Stuarts were born.

Over the next few centuries the family grew in power and wealth, but their fortunes would improve further in 1315 when the 6th High Steward, Walter, became part of the Scottish royal family when he married Marjorie Bruce, daughter of Robert the Bruce. The house would claim the throne when David II died childless, and Walter and Marjorie's son Robert would become Robert II of Scotland.

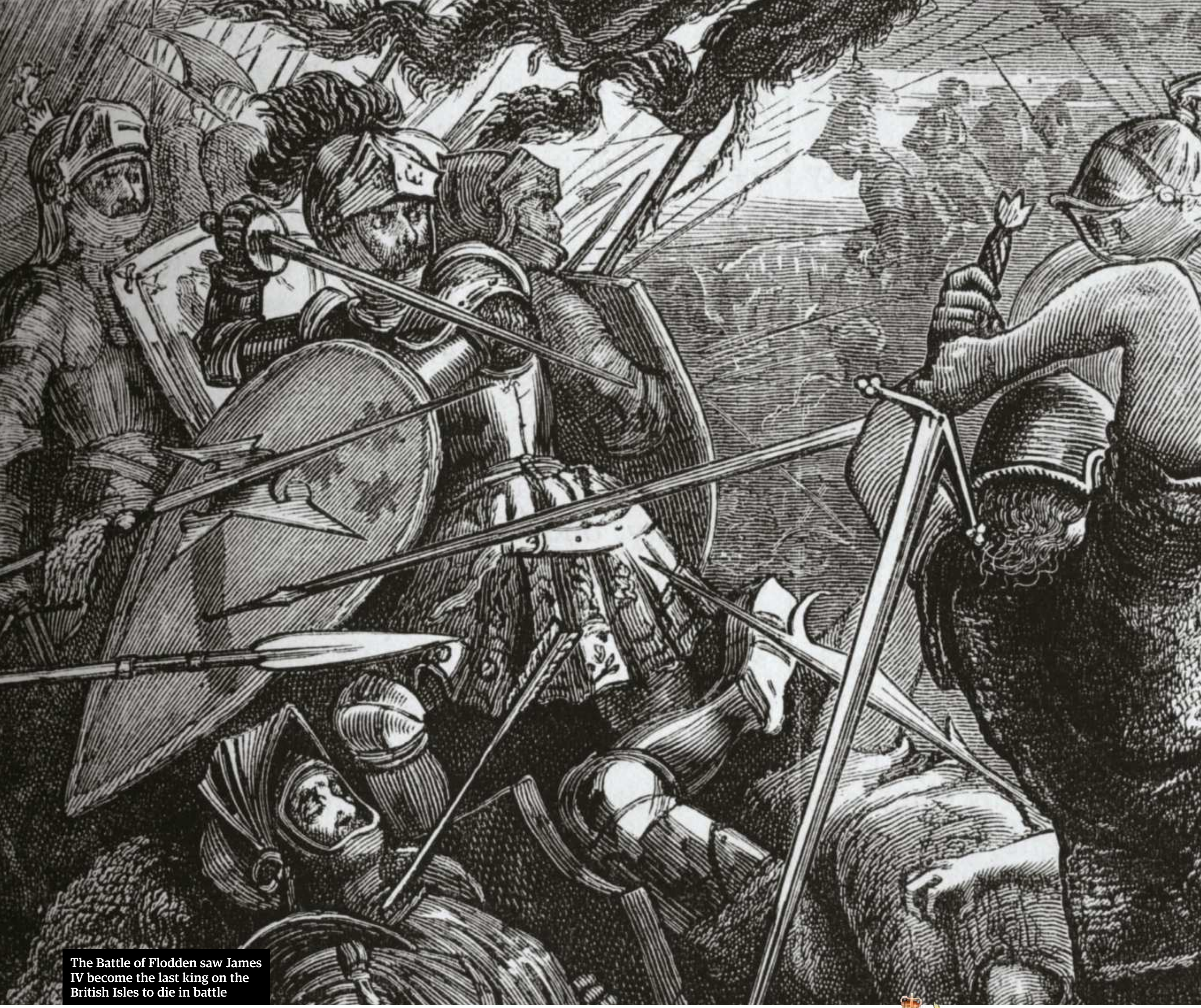
Threats to the crown for the early Stuart monarchs would largely come from within with a near constant struggle with rebellious nobles being the norm. The first James of the Stuart line would lose his life in this way.

Having been sent away for his own safety, the infant James was captured by the English and held captive for much of his early life. Returning to Scotland and exacting his revenge on the nobles who refused to pay his ransom, James purged the court of corrupt nobles, but a conspiracy was mounting against him. Robert II, James' grandfather, had many children, and some

> Hailing from 11th-century Brittany, the Norman ancestors of the Stuart line came to Britain under King Henry I of England



Mary, Queen of Scots divides up her jewels among her servants the day before her execution



The Battle of Flodden saw James IV become the last king on the British Isles to die in battle

The unicorn and the Lion

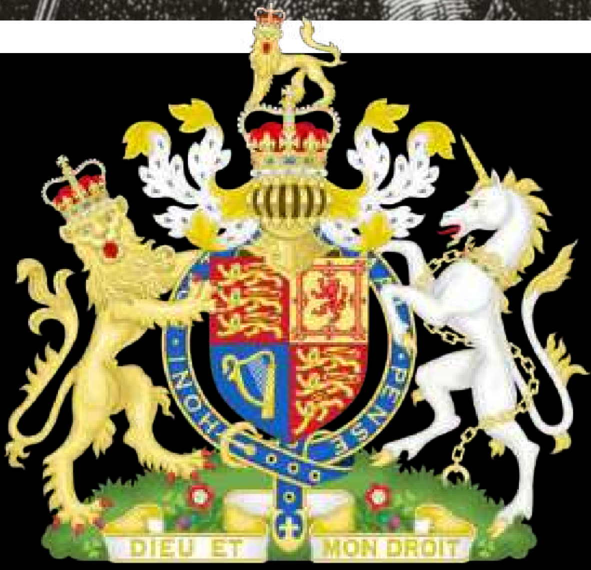
The rivalry between Scotland and England has been centuries in the making

Almost since the countries' inceptions, Scotland and England have been rivals. Nowadays this feud is mostly played out on rugby or football pitches, but its roots reach back for millennia. The intense warfare and tensions started when Edward I invaded Scotland in 1296, claiming overlordship over all the British Isles. From then on Edward's successors would look to exert his claim over the country, and Robert the Bruce's (the king who won the Wars of Scottish Independence) successors would look to frustrate their efforts. It was not until James VI united the crowns that any long-lasting and meaningful peace would exist between the countries.

Another thorn in Anglo-Scottish relations was the Auld Alliance, a friendship and military pact between Scotland and France that had existed since Edward I's invasion. Having England as a mutual enemy, the two countries agreed to lend military aid to each other, but in later centuries, as England and Scotland came together with similar goals, the alliance was strained. James IV broke the Treaty of Perpetual Peace to honour the Auld Alliance, and once the countries united in 1707 France became the enemy of both.

The rivalry would also, by some coincidence, spill over into England and Scotland's national animals. The lion had been used as a heraldic symbol in England since Henry I and was used officially since Richard the Lionheart's reign. The unicorn, Scotland's national animal, came from Celtic mythology as a symbol of purity and innocence but also displays power and masculinity. Its inclusion in chivalric tales and its association with Jesus Christ could explain why it was chosen as Scotland's national animal.

Lions and unicorns are considered enemies in mythology, so it was somehow fitting that they were chosen, although it does not seem to have been deliberate. Once James VI/I took the throne he used both animals, representing the sun and moon, to show the new found unity between the two old enemies.


HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE
DIEU ET
MON DROIT

The Royal Coat of Arms for the United Kingdom has the lion and unicorn, the symbols for England and Scotland, standing side by side — a symbol of unity

"In a desparate bid to escape, James attempted to pry the floorboards loose and escape down into the sewers"

questioned the legitimacy of the line James was descended from. On a winter's night in February 1437, the conspirators attacked James in his lodgings at Perth. In a desperate bid to escape, James attempted to pry the floorboards loose and escape down into the sewers. In a cruel twist of fate, the king had once ordered the sewer entrance blocked off to stop his tennis balls from getting lost. Cornered and with no way out, James was brutally stabbed to death, with one conspirator crying, "I have thus slayne and delivered yow of so crewel a tyrant, the grettest enemye that Scottes or Scotland might have."

James I's son, James II, would also spend much of his reign battling with the Scottish nobility and would see the rise of some of the Stewarts most bitter enemies, the Black Douglases. With James II crowned when he was only an infant, there was a scramble by the most powerful families in Scotland over who should control and guide the young king. Alexander Livingston and William Crichton appeared as the two prominent men to act as James' guardians and regents, but their power was threatened by the young and strong-willed 6th Earl of the Clan Douglas, William. To remove this threat they looked to have Douglas tried for treason against the crown. While they had gathered the evidence they needed, Douglas was a powerful earl with strong fortifications and many warriors – marching into his home and apprehending him simply wasn't possible.

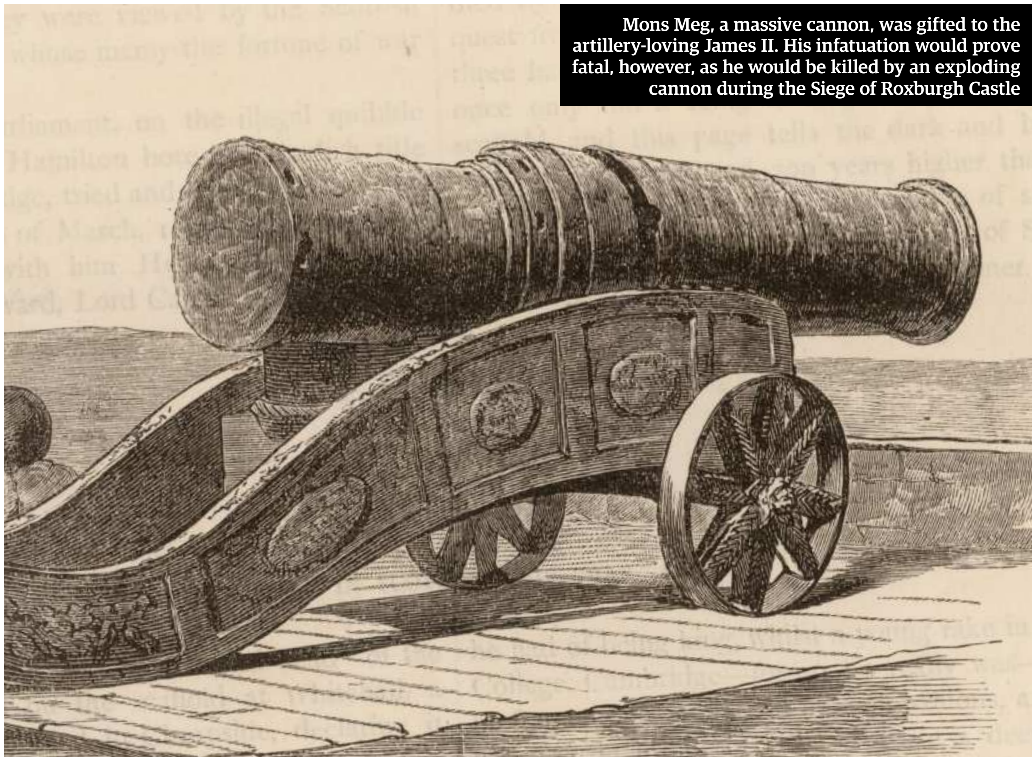
On the 24 November 1440 Douglas was invited to Edinburgh Castle at the king's request. The story goes that the young James became fast friends with the charismatic earl during the feast as a black bull's head was carried into the hall. According to Scottish tradition, a bull's head foretold the imminent death of the guest, and despite young James' pleading, Douglas and his men were decapitated in front of the young monarch. While an exciting story, historians agree that Douglas was likely arrested as soon as he arrived in the castle, tried for treason and then executed on Castle Hill.

Apart from the feud with the Douglases, James II was a popular king and had a special love for gunpowder and cannons. The Duke of Burgundy gifted James a colossal cannon named Mons Meg, which fired cannon balls weighing a massive 180 kilograms. The gun was only used on ceremonial occasions and was last fired successfully to mark the wedding of James' great-great-granddaughter, Mary, Queen of Scots.

James' love of artillery would see his life go up in smoke. While besieging Roxburgh Castle, one of the last English strongholds left over in Scotland since the Wars of Independence, a cannon he was standing next to exploded and killed him. His son James, the third of his name, would take the throne after this unfortunate death.

Anglo-Scottish relations, having been strained for years, took a marked upward shift in James III's reign, especially after Henry VII took the English throne in 1485, ushering in the House of Tudor. A new dynasty meant new diplomatic relations and marriages were discussed, although James III's proposals took precedence over his son's (the future James IV) and so did not secure a lasting alliance as hoped. The inheritance of James III was made equally as uncertain by his clear favouritism of his younger son over his heir. Made the Earl of Ross, James, as the second son was also called, was a slap in the face to the heir, who was only made the Duke of Rothesay, but James III did not stop there. With the dream of a united Scotland fixed in his mind, he made moves to bring the nobility into line, but his heavy-handed approach saw this utterly fail and would ultimately cost him his life.

The estrangement of his son the Duke of Rothesay would see the prince become a rallying point for all the disenfranchised nobles from around Scotland. Gathering an army around himself, the future James IV marched to meet his father in the field at Sauchieburn. James III, carrying Robert the Bruce's sword, could not invoke his ancestor's warrior spirit and was soundly defeated and killed in the battle. The story goes that James III, finding himself cut off from his army, took shelter in a mill and was consoled by a priest. After gaining an audience with the priest, the host revealed himself to be an assassin and his knife caught James in the throat, a most undignified end.



Mons Meg, a massive cannon, was gifted to the artillery-loving James II. His infatuation would prove fatal, however, as he would be killed by an exploding cannon during the Siege of Roxburgh Castle

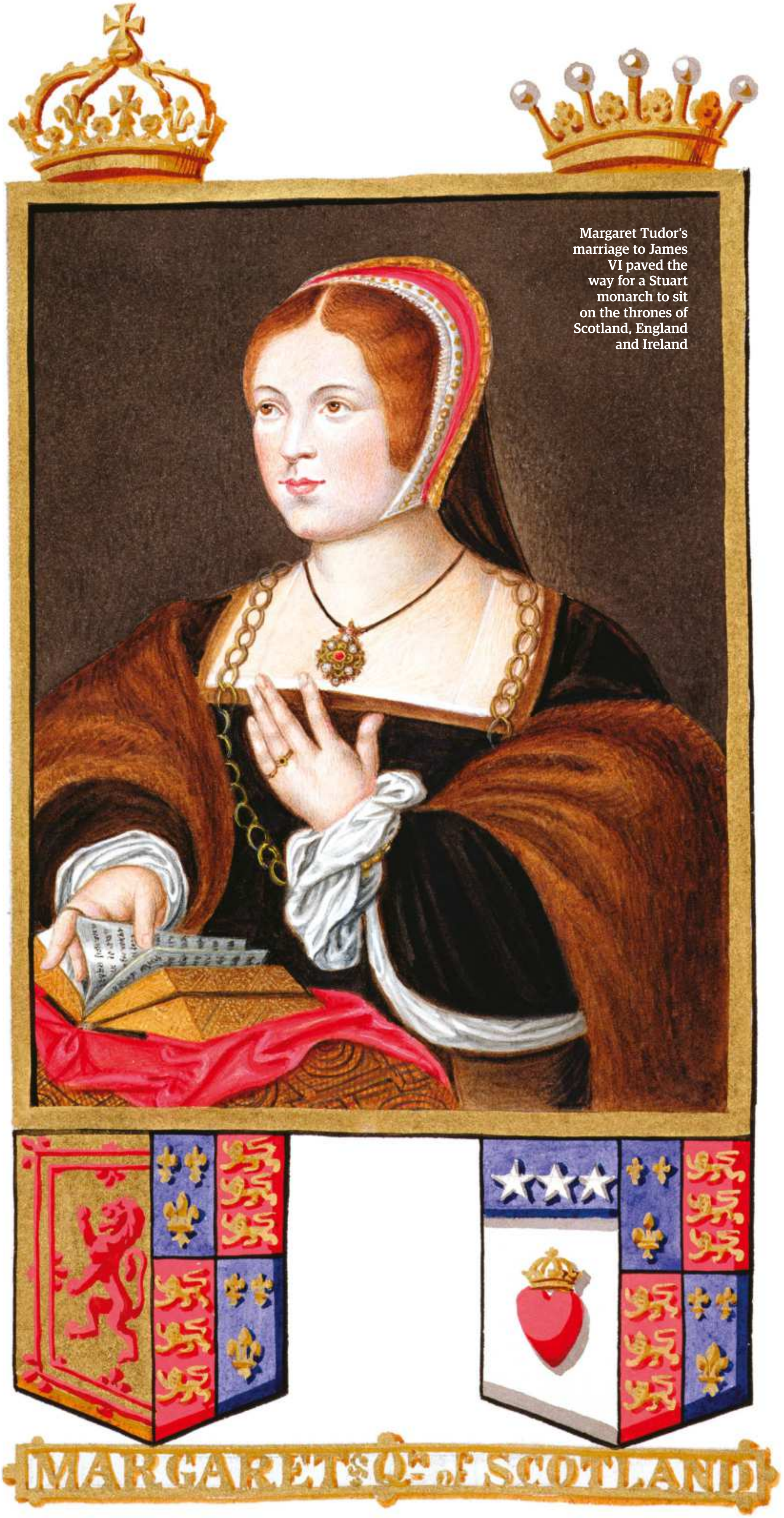
> “James had a talent for naval warfare… He commissioned the largest ship in Europe at the time”

Mystery still surrounds how involved James IV was in his father’s death. Sources seem to indicate that he was probably with the rebels at Sauchieburn, but being implicated in regicide and patricide would hardly be an auspicious beginning to his reign.

James IV was the first king to rule over all of what we now consider to be Scotland. His campaigns in the north had united the country, and for the first time nobles from every corner of the land were sat in his council. Having paired new ship building and gunpowder technology together, he created mobile gun platforms that had finally subdued the Lords of the Isles, who had been a thorn in the Stuarts’ side for generations.

He patronised the arts, licensing royal printing presses that turned out many works including the *Scotichronicon*, a grand history of Scotland that stressed its independence. As he had shown in his clash with the Lord of the Isles, James had a talent for naval warfare. As well as supporting his uncle King Hans of Denmark against a revolt in Sweden and Norway, he commissioned the largest warship in Europe at the time, The Great Michael. The ship was offered to the pope for use against the Ottomans and was twice the size of the Mary Rose in England. But her upkeep was too great for a country like Scotland and the ship was eventually sold to the French and may have taken part in the Battle of the Solent against the Mary Rose.

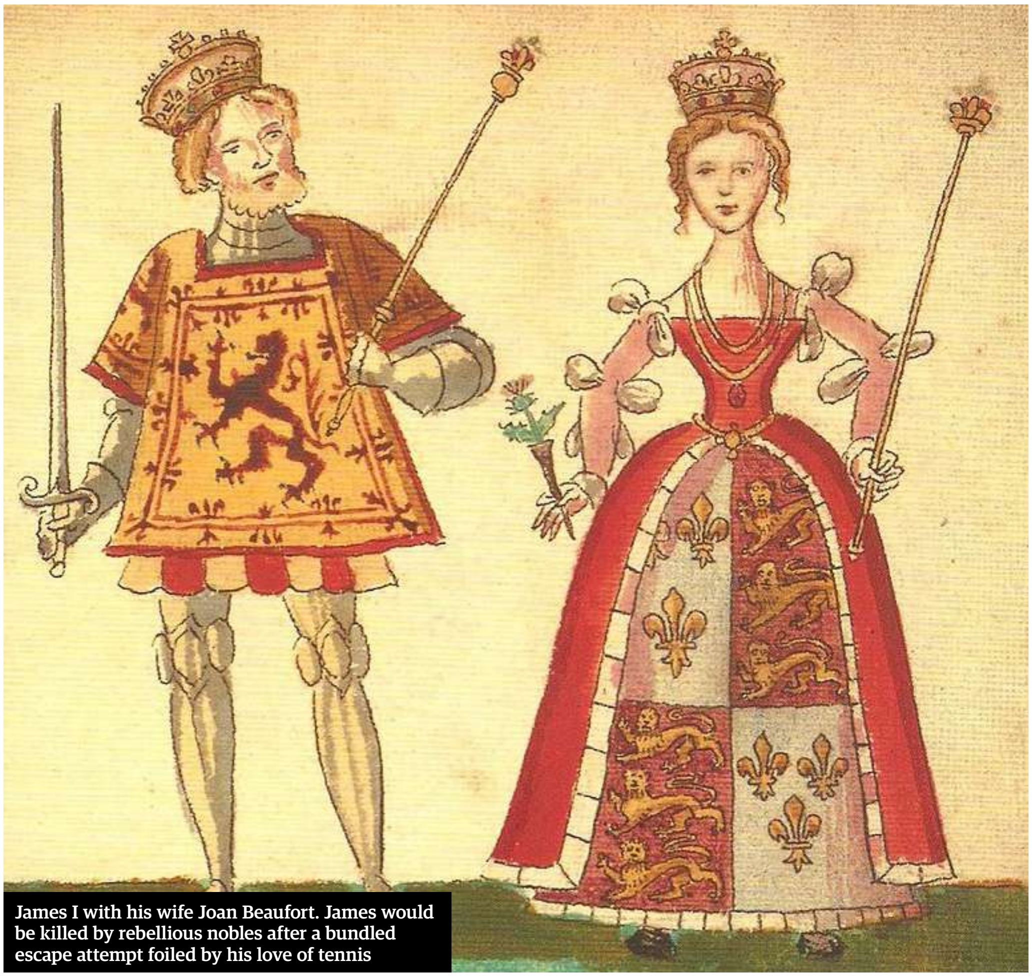
Unknowingly for him, the wedding of the dashing, brave and charismatic James would see his progenies sit on the throne of England 100 years after he said ‘I do’. His bride-to-be was the 13-year-old daughter of Henry VII, Margaret Tudor.



Margaret Tudor’s marriage to James VI paved the way for a Stuart monarch to sit on the thrones of Scotland, England and Ireland

SCOTTORVM ROBERTVS DEI GRACIA

Robert II, the first monarch of the Stuart line, was Robert the Bruce’s grandson



James I with his wife Joan Beaufort. James would be killed by rebellious nobles after a bundled escape attempt foiled by his love of tennis

Henry VII is said to have told his courtiers that a Scottish king would one day sit on the English throne, but England would still hold more power, stating, "The accession will be of Scotland to England, not of England to Scotland." The thistle and the rose were joined, although James would not live to see the seeds of this relationship bear fruit as he was forced to turn his attention to the border and Henry VIII's encroaching influence.

The English king looked to emulate his hero, the great warrior King Henry V, over his more peace-loving father. James and Henry VII had signed the first permanent peace between England and Scotland for more than 200 years, the Treaty of Perpetual Peace. But with Henry VIII's army storming over to France, James' hands were tied, as the Auld Alliance, a centuries-old military pact between Scotland and France, overruled the more recent deal. England had now joined the Holy League and now, along with Spain, the Netherlands, The Holy Roman Empire and the Papal states, looked to check the power of the frighteningly strong French king, Louis XII.

This obviously left Scotland in a sticky situation. They had a centuries-old obligation to uphold their treaty with France, but in doing so they would jeopardise the newly found peace with England. Siding with the French not only meant war with England but also saw James excommunicated. The Papacy was at war with France and since Scotland was not on its side, they were not considered to be on God's side.

James' march on England was not the first time he had tried to destabilise England. In 1496 he had lent support to the Yorkist pretender to the throne, Perkin Warbeck. However, this aid only amounted to a few border raids, and James did not seem to have had much enthusiasm for the charlatan pretender. This time, however, James was serious and marched 40,000 men over the border, the largest Scottish army ever to enter England. As well as being a symbol of power, the army was made up of nobility from every corner of the country. James had united Scotland like no other king before him, a truly national army.

The English army that met the Scots on Flodden Field was led by Catherine of Aragon, as Henry VIII was still campaigning in France. The Scots employed a new weapon from the continent, a 25-foot pike, which, when used en masse, presented a fearsome weapon. Unfortunately for James, the terrain and conditions during the battle made it difficult to use the pike correctly, and the English billhook, a weapon that combined the advantages of a spear and axe, won the day. James and much of the Scottish nobility lost their lives at Flodden, a crushing blow for the Scots.

James' death at Flodden marked him as the last British monarch to die on the field of battle. His body, filled with arrows and slashed by billhooks,

The Black Douglases

The Clan Douglas went from national heroes to national zeroes

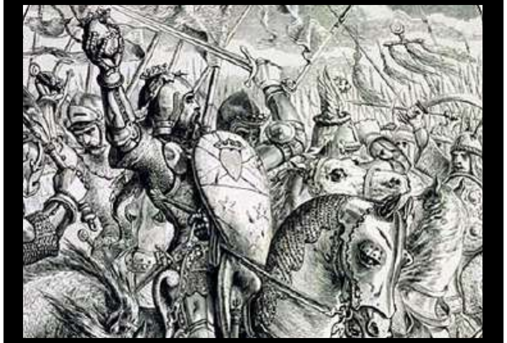
The medieval history of Clan Douglas is one of ever-shifting fortunes — turning from swashbuckling heroes to the bitter enemies of the crown. During the Scottish Wars of Independence they became folk heroes of sorts. Sir James Douglas, the first 'Black Douglas', fought alongside Robert the Bruce and became a boogeyman figure to the English. And during the Second War of Scottish Independence, William Douglas, known as the 'Flower of Chivalry', proved the clan's worth again by capturing the heavily defended Edinburgh Castle from the English in 1341.

Using a tactic reminiscent of the Trojan Horse, Douglas and his men dressed as merchants, gained access to the castle and flung the gates open to allow the bloodthirsty citizens of Edinburgh to pour in. The defenders were slaughtered, many being hurled off the rock the castle stood on.

With the English threat gone the Douglases, now a very powerful clan, turned their ambitions towards the Scottish throne. They had married into the royal family by Robert III's daughter matched with Archibald Douglas and the clan was involved in military struggles on the border and on the continent. This power was seen by the Stewart kings as a destabilising force in the country, and they looked to stamp the clan down, a show of force to keep the rest of the nobility in line.

The first bloody actions were carried out by James II, or at least in his name. The 16-year-old William Douglas, the 6th Earl, was killed in what would come to be known as the apocryphal Black Dinner. As the king was only ten years old during this time, it is hard to see a child ordering the cold-blooded execution of one of the most powerful men in the country. But years later a similar episode would play out when a 23-year-old James would stab the 8th Earl, another William, after he had been accused of treason and plotting with the English. This act would lead to the 9th Earl, James Douglas, rebelling against the throne and having to be brought to heel at the Battle of Arkinholm 1552.

Here, James, styled the 'Black Douglas' in the tradition of the family, fought against the Royal forces led by the 'Red Douglas', George, whose family ties to James saw him fight the majority of his family. This battle would spell an end to the Black Douglases and see the rise of the red, who were loyal to the crown. A family that began as heroes turned enemies of the crown, brought low by their ambitions and the military might of the Stewarts.



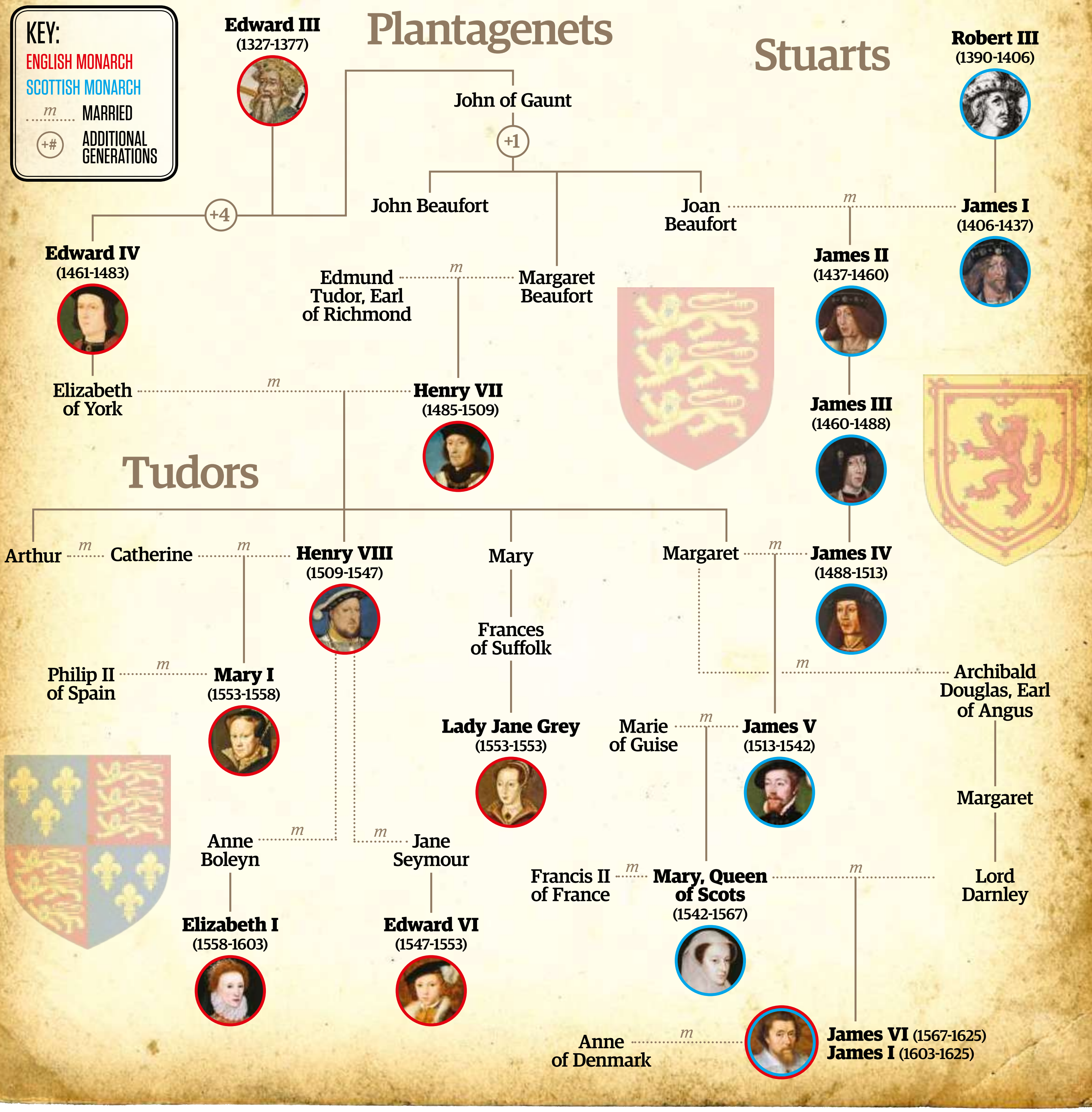
James Douglas carries Robert the Bruce's heart on crusade. The Clan Douglas had served the crown faithfully until they became too powerful to control

Keeping it in the family

The joining of the houses Stuart and Tudor paved the way for the union of the crowns

As the two major royal lines inhabiting a small island, the chances of the Stuart and Tudor houses becoming related was extremely high. The royal houses of Scotland and England had always enjoyed royal ties, with princes and princesses married for prosperity, friendship and peace. The arrival of the Tudor dynasty saw Anglo-Scottish relations turn over a new leaf. The signing of the Treaty of Perpetual Peace saw an end to Scottish-English hostilities and the marriage of Margaret Tudor, Henry VII's daughter, to James IV was part of it.

The families had been indirectly linked before with James I being married to Joan Beaufort, Henry VII's great-aunt, but James and Margaret's marriage was the first direct marriage after the Tudors had gained the throne. While the Scottish royal family was secure in its inheritance, the Tudor household was coming under pressure. Henry VIII's only son, Edward VI, had died young and named his cousin Lady Jane Grey as heir, excluding his half sisters, Mary and Elizabeth. After the king's death Mary took the throne from Lady Jane Grey, but on her death the throne passed to her sister Elizabeth. Like her sister, Elizabeth had no legitimate heir, leading Robert Cecil to make James VI, the closest blood relative to the late queen, James I of England and Ireland.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ENGLISH MONARCH
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m MARRIED
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Plantagenets
Stuarts
Tudors
Edward III (1327-1377)
John of Gaunt
+1
+4
Robert III (1390-1406)
John Beaufort
Joan Beaufort
m
James I (1406-1437)
Edward IV (1461-1483)
Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond
m
Margaret Beaufort
James II (1437-1460)
Elizabeth of York
m
Henry VII (1485-1509)
James III (1460-1488)
Arthur
m
Catherine
m
Henry VIII (1509-1547)
Mary
Margaret
m
James IV (1488-1513)
Frances of Suffolk
Philip II of Spain
m
Mary I (1553-1558)
m
Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus
Lady Jane Grey (1553-1553)
Marie of Guise
m
James V (1513-1542)
Margaret
Anne Boleyn
m
m
Jane Seymour
Francis II of France
m
Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-1567)
m
Lord Darnley
Elizabeth I (1558-1603)
Edward VI (1547-1553)
Anne of Denmark
m
James VI (1567-1625)
James I (1603-1625)

was embalmed and sent to Catherine of Aragon as a trophy. She in turn sent his bloody and tattered surcoat to her husband in France, urging him to use the ragged garment as a war banner. James' body was not able to receive a royal burial as the king was still excommunicated and his body and head, which had become detached and used as a football, are now lost forever. A rather ignoble end to Scotland's last great warrior king. The crown was inherited by James' son, who became James V.

His daughter, Mary Queen of Scots, is one of the most famous and tragic of the Stuart monarchs. Imprisoned for much of her life, the events surrounding her reign and shocking execution styles itself into an early modern soap opera of epic proportions and paved the way for her son to ascend to the English throne. She was just six days old when her father, James V, passed away, leaving the country open to the 'rough wooing' of Henry VIII, who was determined to have her marry his son Edward and join the crowns of Scotland and England. Both Henry and Henri II of France knew that whoever controlled the infant Mary would hold sway over Scotland and its political and religious future. She had come to the throne at a time when animosity between Protestants and Catholics in Scotland was at an all-time high.

The country was still Catholic when Mary became queen, and she was clever enough to not deal heavy-handedly with the Protestant minority. However, a series of controveries during her reign spurred nobles to rebel against her, instead placing her one-year-old son, James, on the throne. Mary fled to England in the hope of convincing her cousin, the Protestant monarch Elizabeth I, to aid her in retaking the country. Trouble had followed Mary, however, and she became a suspect in the mysterious death of her husband Lord Danley.

Imprisoned for nearly 20 years, Mary would spend her last days in England, and her downfall would be unknowingly instigated by the pope. 'Regnans in Excelsis' was a papal bull exempting English Catholics from the country's taxes and laws. It also declared that the Protestant Queen Elizabeth I was not the rightful heir to the throne. This act fermented many plots and rebellions throughout the country and Mary, a possible Catholic claimant to the throne, was at the centre of this web of intrigue.

Her end came with the Babington Plot, which looked to kill Elizabeth and replace her with Mary, someone who would be sympathetic to the Catholic's cause. Babington corresponded with Mary with coded letters in which the imprisoned queen gave orders to have Elizabeth killed. Unknown to Mary, Elizabeth's spy network had intercepted these communications and the damning evidence was used during her trial to seek the death penalty. In what would become somewhat of a Stuart tradition, Mary I of Scotland was decapitated on 8 February 1587.

However, the Stuarts were not done yet, as Mary's son was set to unite the crowns and raise the family to even loftier power. Elizabeth I had not named an heir, and James VI had a strong claim to the English throne. Each of his parents were descended from the Tudor king Henry VII through Margaret Tudor, and unlike his mother, he was a Protestant. Already a king, the closest living relative and with relations between Scotland and England better than they had been for years, James looked like the perfect candidate to ensure a smooth and bloodless transfer of power.

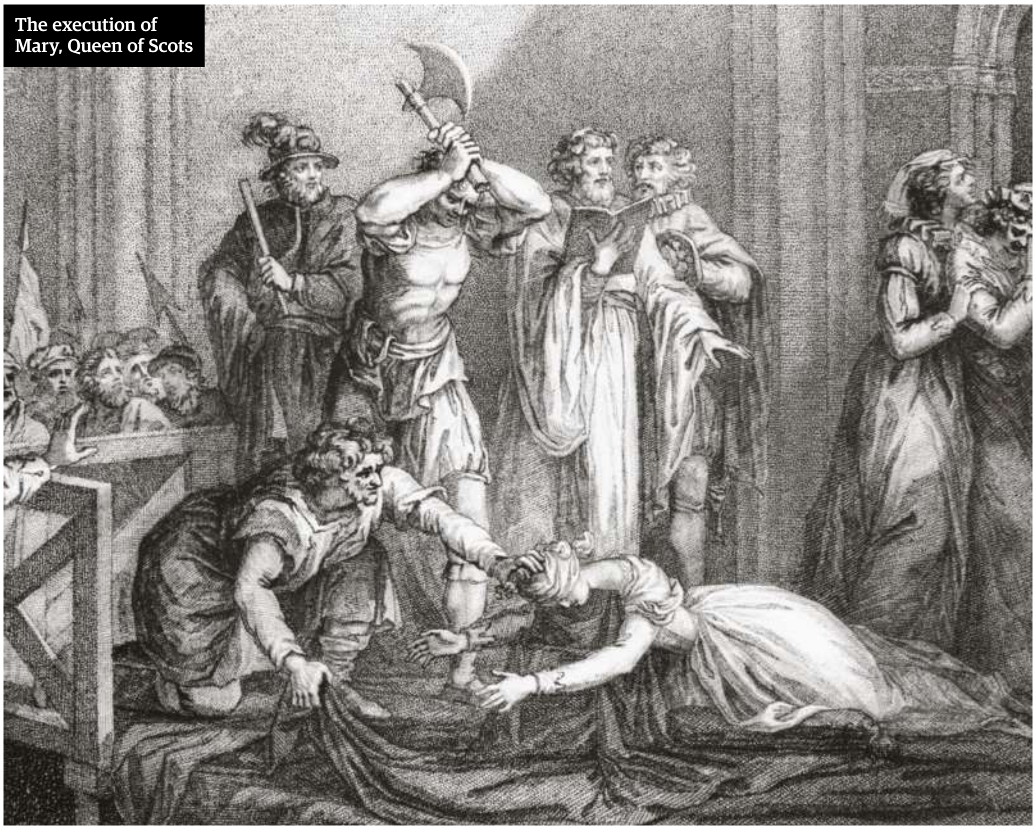
An atmosphere of fear and uncertainty surrounded the last years of Elizabeth's reign, as even James was doubtful of his position to wear the English and Scottish crowns. The ease with which James took the throne was probably a surprise to many of the nobles, both English and Scottish, and to James himself. Henry VIII had stipulated in his will that James was not able to ascend to the throne, but this was countered by James' claim that he ruled through the divine right of kings. Succeeding by hereditary right and primogeniture, he argued that Henry VIII had no power to deny these holy and historic rights.

The secret correspondence between James and Elizabeth's principal minister, Robert Cecil, showed that the Scottish king had the support of at least some of the privy councillors in England. The possibly treasonous correspondence between James VI and Cecil began months before the queen's death. With her reluctance to name an heir, Cecil took it upon himself to set up James' ascension to power.

Shortly before Elizabeth's death a draft proclamation was sent to James to ensure readiness. Within hours of the queen's demise in 1603 James was declared king of Scotland, England and Ireland and the two crowns were united.

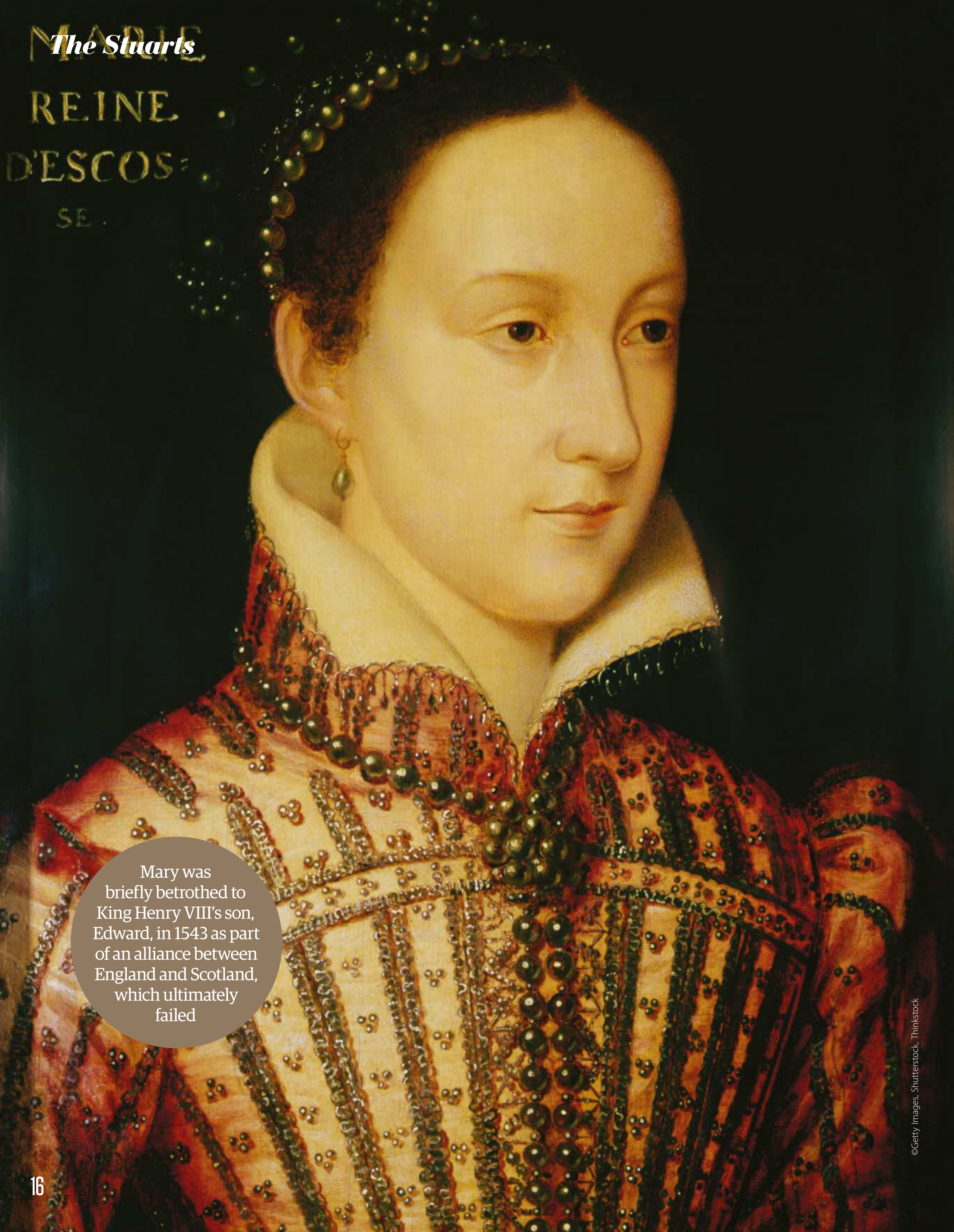
As Henry VII had predicted, England soon became the focus of James' attentions. Promising to return to Scotland every three years, he would only visit once in his 14-year reign as joint monarch. This may have been out of necessity, as his vision for the two countries to unite was met with fierce opposition in the House of Commons. By 1607 James had managed to get many of the hostile laws against Scotland repealed and had styled himself King of Great Britain. While these acts helped to bridge the gap between the two countries, a political union was still out of the question. James, frustrated by this, described the English Parliament as "barren by preconceived opinions".

This new beginning for the Stuarts would herald a new age but one still fraught with danger. The fresh start would be marred by rivalry, religious differences and anti-monarchy sentiment. It was a new chapter for the royal house, but one no less thrilling and dangerous.


The execution of Mary, Queen of Scots

"In what would become somewhat of a Stuart tradition, Mary I of Scotland was decapitated on 8 February 1587"

©Getty Images



Mary was briefly betrothed to King Henry VIII's son, Edward, in 1543 as part of an alliance between England and Scotland, which ultimately failed

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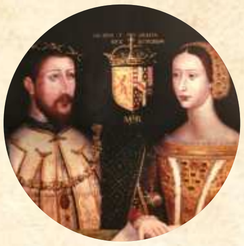
Mary, Queen of Scots

Discover the tale of heartbreak, betrayal and loss that led to the downfall of Scotland's most tragic queen

Timeline

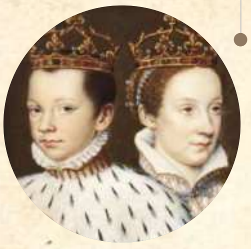
1542

A queen is born
Mary, the only surviving child of James V of Scotland, is born. Desperate for a male heir, James is disappointed. Tragedy strikes six days later when he suddenly dies, making the young princess the new queen of Scotland.
8 December 1542



Mary's coronation
Barely nine months old, Mary is crowned at Stirling Castle. The Earl of Arran acts as her regent until 1554, when Mary's mother takes over.
9 September 1543

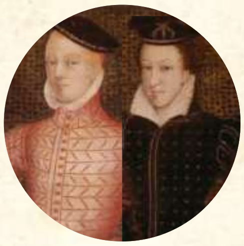
Fulfilling her duty
To cement an alliance with France, 15-year-old Mary marries the dauphin, Francis. She had been raised in France as part of the marriage agreement since 1548. Francis becomes king in 1559 after the death of his father, Henri II.
24 April 1558



A young widow
Francis dies less than 18 months into his reign. Mary is left heartbroken by his loss, especially after her mother's death six months before.
5 December 1560

No place like home?
18-year-old Mary returns to Scotland, determined to take control over her life. However, she finds she's now a stranger in her own country.
19 August 1561

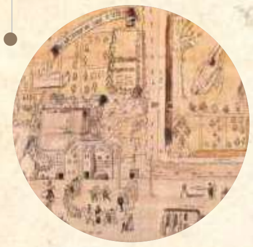
Marriage made in hell
Mary marries her first cousin Lord Darnley at Holyrood Palace, angering Elizabeth I of England as they both have strong claims to the English throne. It also causes jealousy among the Scottish nobility, who believe Darnley had risen too far above his station.
29 July 1565



A bloody murder
Darnley becomes increasingly unstable as Mary resists his efforts to name him as her equal co-ruler. He secretly hatches a plot with Protestant rebels to gain the crown, which sees him participate in the murder of Mary's private secretary, David Rizzo, in front of the shocked and pregnant queen.
9 March 1566

Birth of a future king
After fleeing to Edinburgh Castle, Mary gives birth to her only child, James. Her marriage to Darnley is in tatters and she starts to consider how to get rid of him.
19 June 1566

Foul play
An explosion in the early hours of the morning destroys Darnley's lodgings at Kirk O'Field, just outside Edinburgh. Darnley's body is found in the garden and rumours swirl that he was actually murdered. The queen is a suspect as well as her close acquaintance, the Earl of Bothwell.
9-10 February 1567



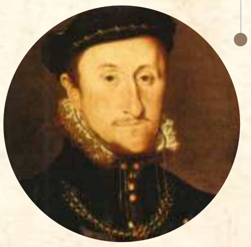
A scandalous abduction
Mary's reputation is damaged by the scandal surrounding her husband's death. After visiting her son at Stirling Castle, Bothwell insists on escorting her to Dunbar Castle for her safety. He attacks Mary, although it is debated whether it was rape or consensual.
24 April 1567

A recipe for disaster
Mary marries Bothwell a mere three months after Darnley's death, sparking outrage among the nobility, who turn against their queen and raise an army.
15 May 1567

A prison fit for a queen
Mary and Bothwell meet the rebel army at Carberry Hill, where the queen is taken captive after her supporters dwindle away. Bothwell is exiled abroad and dies in a Danish prison.
15 June 1567

Another heartbreaking loss
After being imprisoned in Loch Leven Castle by the rebels, Mary suffers a devastating miscarriage, losing the twins she conceived with Bothwell.
20-23 July 1567

A deposed queen
Just a day after the miscarriage, Mary is forced to abdicate in favour of her one-year-old son, James. Mary, who last saw her son at ten months old, never sees him again. Her half-brother, the Earl of Moray, becomes regent.
24 July 1567



A daring escape
With help from her few supporters, Mary disguises herself and escapes from Scotland. Hoping that her cousin Elizabeth will assist her, she heads to England.
2 May 1568

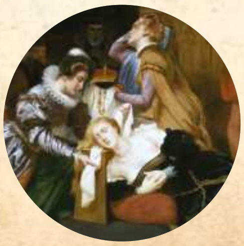
TURN TO PAGE 18

A captive queen
Mary is promptly arrested by English authorities as Elizabeth fears that her cousin will become the focus of Catholic plots to dethrone her.
18 May 1568

Damning evidence
After almost 20 years under house arrest, a letter is uncovered by spymaster Sir Francis Walsingham implicating Mary in the Babington Plot to kill her cousin. The last in a series of Catholic schemes, it aimed to replace Elizabeth with Mary.
11 August 1586

Sentenced to death
Mary is tried on the grounds of treason, which she vehemently denies. She argues that as a queen regnant she is not subject to English laws and is only answerable to God. Despite this, she is found guilty and is given the death sentence.
v14-15 October 1586

Sign, sealed, delivered
Although Elizabeth hesitates for months, she finally signs Mary's death warrant. Whether she intended for it to be enacted has been subject to debate ever since.
1 February 1587



1587

End of the line
Mary is beheaded six days after her death warrant is signed. Her execution sends shockwaves throughout Europe and she becomes a Catholic martyr. Her son James succeeds Elizabeth in 1603, uniting England and Scotland.
8 February 1587

A Queens' feud

The deadly rivalry between Elizabeth I and her scandalous cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots

In the parliament of 1586, Job Throckmorton, the MP for Warwick, launched a bilious attack on Mary Stuart. She was, he bellowed, "such a creature whom no Christian eye can behold with patience, whose villainy hath stained the earth and infected the air, the breath of whose malice towards the Church of God and the Lord's anointed, our dread sovereign, hath in a loathsome kind of savour fumed up to the heavens." Destroying Mary would be "one of the fairest riddances that ever the Church of God had" and Throckmorton called upon his fellow MPs to "be all joint suitors to her Majesty that Jezebel may live no longer."

He was confident that no one would dare "stain his mouth in defence of [Mary]," and he was right. Mary, Parliament explained, was "hardened in malice against your royal person, notwithstanding that you have done her all favour, mercy and kindness." She was "greedy for your death and preferreth it before her own life," and who could be surprised after so many years striving "to ruin and overthrow the happy state and common weal of this most noble realm"?

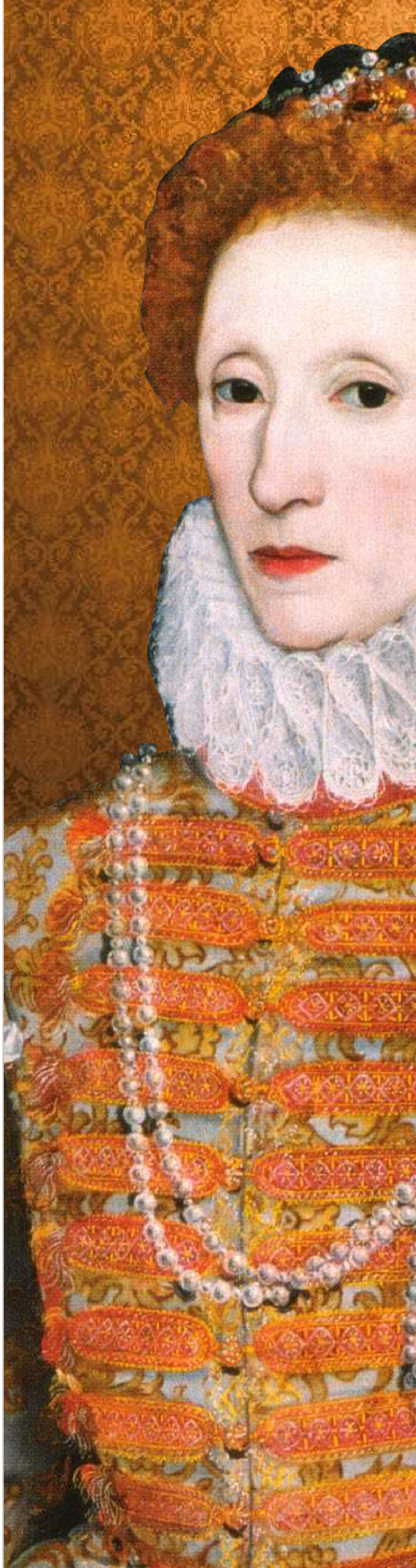
> "Elizabeth's failure to produce an heir became increasingly irksome"

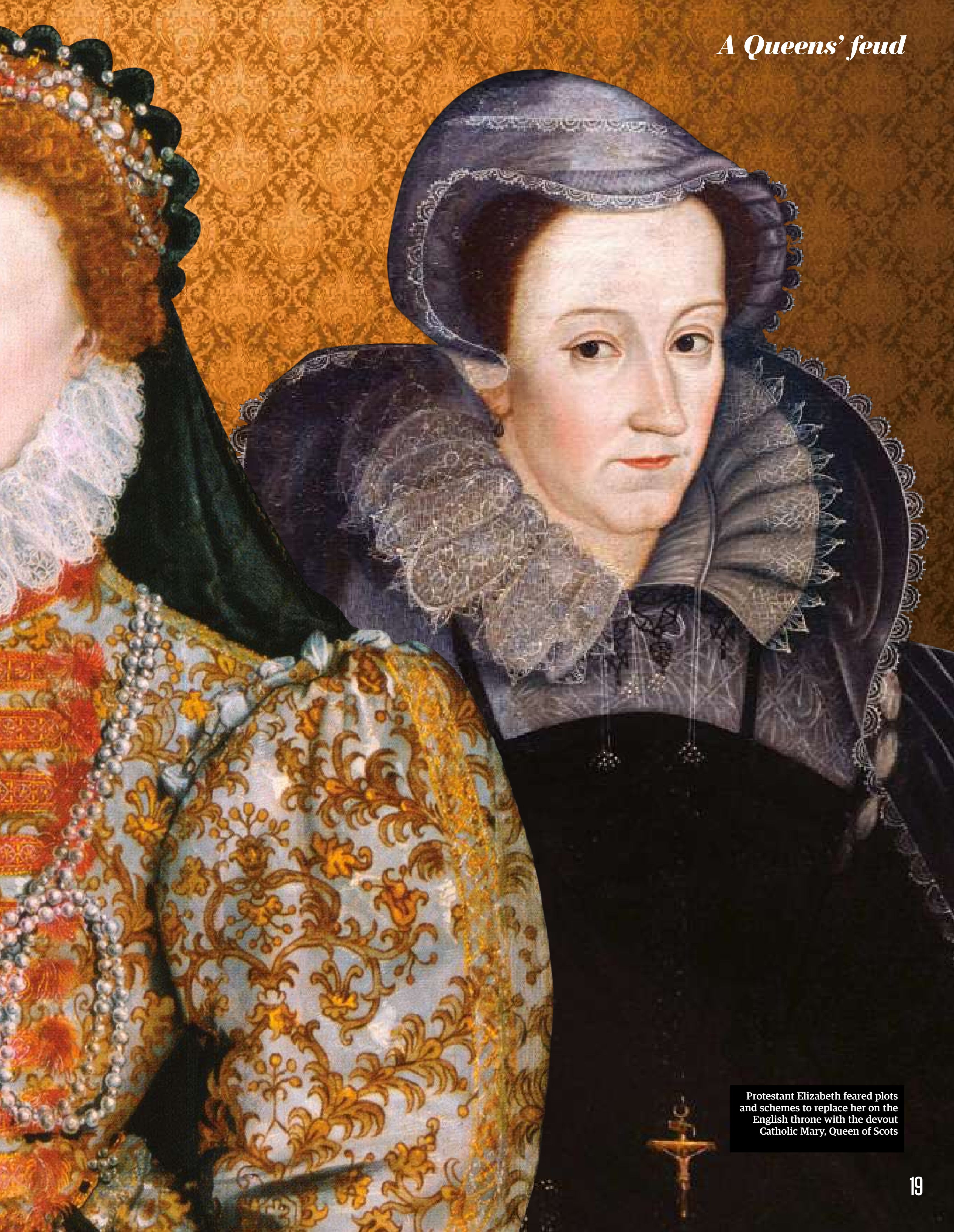
How had matters reached so intense a pitch that a queen was being asked to spill the royal blood of her cousin? Therein lies one of the the most poignant and befuddling Tudor tales.

The relationship between Mary Stuart and Elizabeth Tudor was always destined to be turbulent, and the royal succession carries most of the blame. At the outset of her reign, another Tudor parliament had petitioned Elizabeth to marry at her earliest convenience, a demand that she brushed off and declared that, for now at least, she would remain "in this kind of life in which I yet live." If marriage became a possibility, she would choose a candidate who had England's best interests at heart, but "In the end, this shall be for me sufficient: that a marble stone shall declare that a queen having lived such a time, lived and died a virgin."

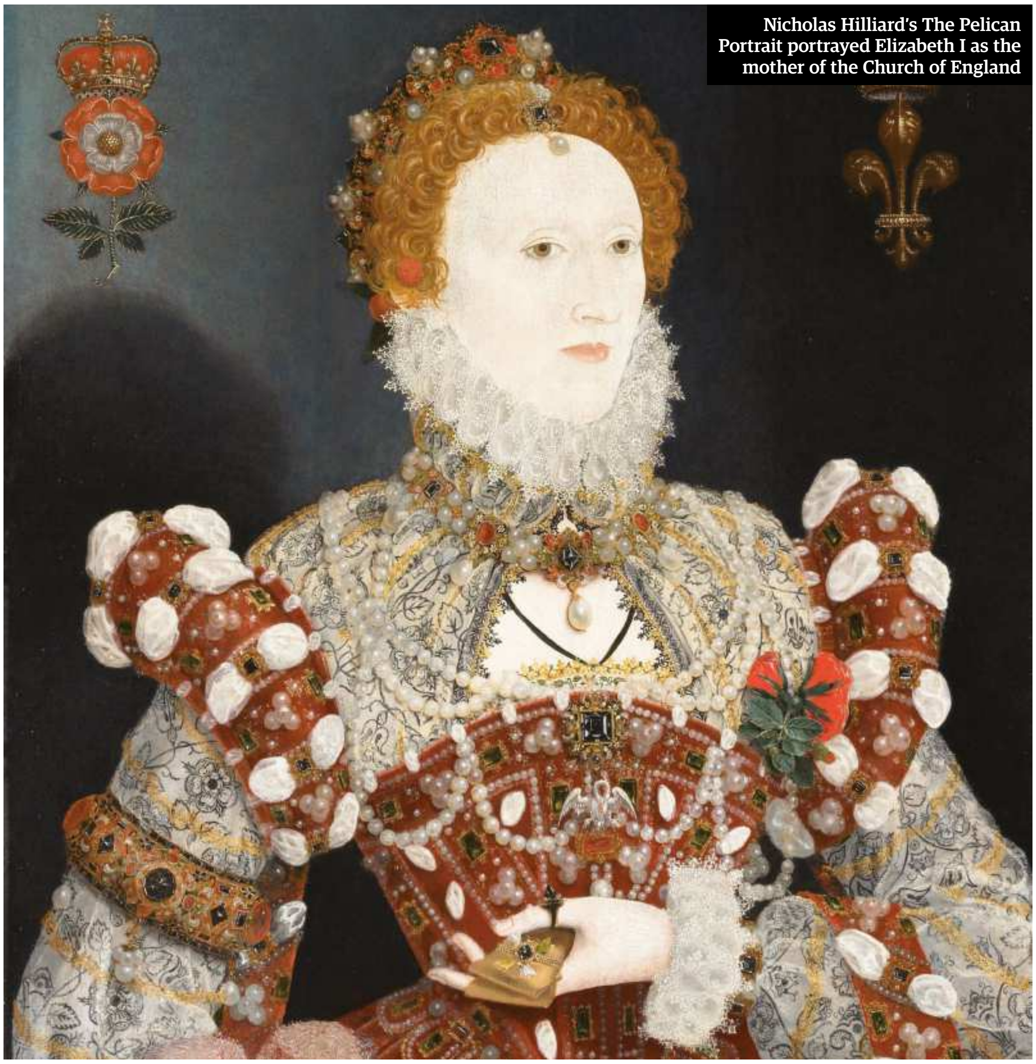
In 1559, almost everyone seemed to have assumed that this was a rhetorical flourish rather than a declaration of dynastic intent, but Elizabeth's failure to find a husband and produce the all-important heir became increasingly irksome. In fairness, any match would have been problematic. A foreign husband raised the spectre of unwelcome overseas interference in English affairs, and the realm had seen enough of that during the marriage of Mary Tudor and Philip II of Spain. It was also difficult to envision any home-grown husband of adequate stature or whose selection would not stir up rivalries within the English nobility.

For all that, many people opined that some solution would have been better than none and, as early as 1562, Bishop John Jewel of Salisbury captured the prevailing mood: "Oh how wretched are we who cannot tell under what sovereign we are to live." Marriage was not the only way to ease the nation's concerns, of course. A successor could be named and, back in the 1559 parliament, Elizabeth had promised to do precisely that "in convenient time". The only trouble was that the obvious candidate, Mary, Queen of Scots, was deeply controversial. Mary's claim was pristine. She was the daughter of James V of Scotland, the son of Henry VIII's sister, Margaret Tudor. Elizabeth's grandfather and Mary's great-grandfather were one





Protestant Elizabeth feared plots and schemes to replace her on the English throne with the devout Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots



Nicholas Hilliard's The Pelican Portrait portrayed Elizabeth I as the mother of the Church of England

The ruins of Lochleven Castle, the fortress in Scotland where Mary was held prisoner before her escape south to England

and the same person: Henry VII. In simpler times, naming Mary as a successor would have been a relatively straightforward matter.

Mary had been born on 8 December 1542 and within just a few days, following the death of her father, she ascended the Scottish throne. In July 1543, one of the clauses of the Treaty of Greenwich mandated the betrothal of Mary and Henry VIII's son, Edward. However, the Scots quickly reneged and another Anglo-Scottish war ensued. Mary's marital future took an alternative course and, in July 1548, the Scottish parliament agreed to her betrothal to the French dauphin, Francis. Mary headed off to France in August and, after years at the French court, married Francis in April 1558.

Just a few months later in November, Mary Tudor died and many Catholic monarchs across Europe looked askance at the spectacle of Elizabeth, the daughter of the hated Anne Boleyn, ascending the English throne. Surely Mary, Queen of Scots - a woman of unquestionable Catholic sympathies - was a more legitimate monarch than Elizabeth? In France, at any rate, the English royal arms were applied to Mary and when Henri II died in July 1559, Francis and Mary were able to style themselves the rulers of France, Scotland and England.

Such moves were more about bluster than anything else, but they were provocative and would not quickly be forgotten - like the glaring reality of Mary's Catholicism. This was deeply unpalatable to many in Elizabeth's regime, not least William Cecil, who would dedicate great energies over the coming decades to destroying Mary. It was all too obvious that many Catholic European rulers perceived Mary as not so much a worthy successor should Elizabeth die, but as an ideal replacement. For Philip II of Spain, Mary would always be "the gate by which religion must enter the realm of England."

Needless to say, the notion of naming Mary as Elizabeth's successor was, from the outset, deemed to be perilous, but this did not make it impossible. After her husband's death December 1560, Mary returned to Scotland and, as well as coping with the pressures of a Protestant regime and a fractious nobility, made her case to the English government. In a letter written in 1566, Mary urged Elizabeth's Privy Council to "move your sovereign to show her own reasonable favour to our advancement in that which is right." She was referring to the naming of Elizabeth's heir, though she wisely assured the Council that "we be not of mind to press our good sister further than shall come of her own good pleasure."

Mary's supporters were more forthright. John Leslie wrote of the duty of all monarchs to prepare for a smooth transition of power after their deaths. To leave the succession open was to risk "the imminent and almost the inevitable danger of this our noble realm being [overwhelmed] with the raging and roaring waves of mutual discord and to be consumed with the terrible force of civil dissension." Elizabeth needed to look to Mary, whose claim to the throne was "most conformable to the law of God, of nature, and of this realm."

Leslie was entirely correct and, albeit rather belatedly, Mary formally abandoned any ambitions to supplant Elizabeth. Publicly, at least, the succession was all that Mary sought, but Elizabeth made it

The rise & fall of Mary

1542

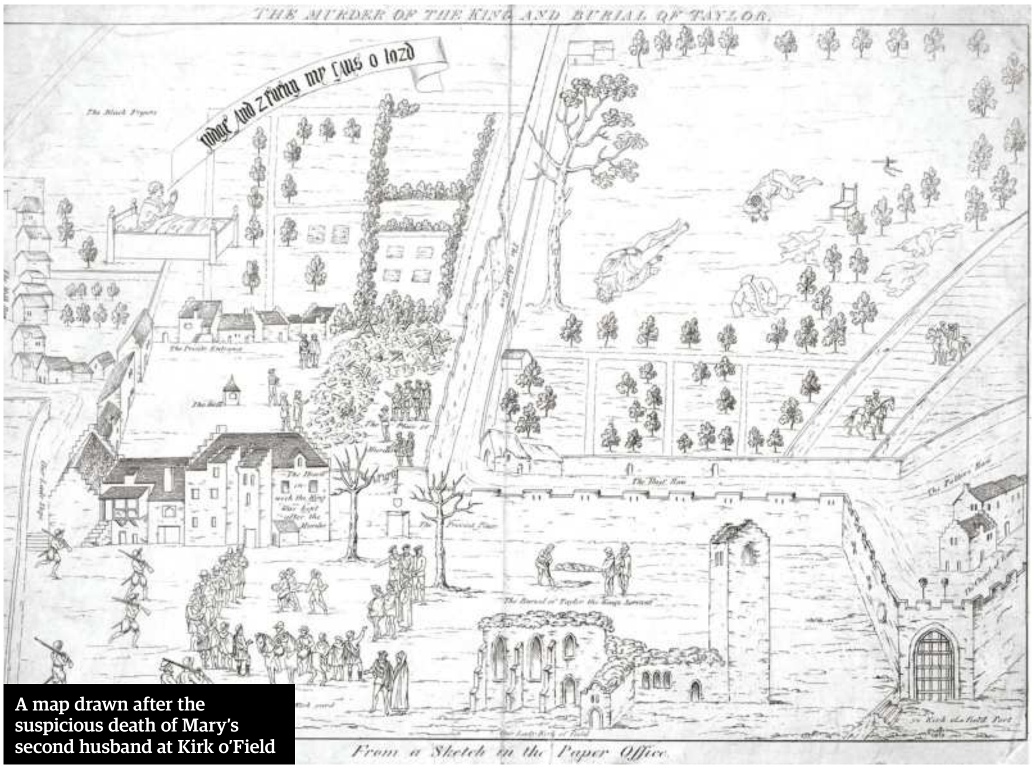
A queen is born
Mary Stuart is born at Linlithgow Palace in West Lothian. Her father, James V, dies on 14 December and Mary succeeds him. Her coronation takes place on 9 September 1543.
8 December 1542

Betrothement
The treaty of Greenwich between England and Scotland is signed. Mary is to be betrothed to the future Edward VI. However, the Scots renege in December, provoking Anglo-Scottish war.
1 July 1543

Royal consent
The Scottish parliament agrees to Mary's betrothal to Francis, the Dauphin of France. Mary arrives in France nearly a month later on 13 August and begins a 13-year stay in the country.
7 July 1548

The marriage
Mary and Francis marry at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. On 17 November, Mary I of England dies in London and is succeeded by her younger sister, Elizabeth I.
24 April 1558

A young widow
Henri II of France dies in Paris. Francis and Mary become the rulers of France, but Francis dies on 5 December 1560 and Mary loses the crown to Charles XI and his mother, Catherine de' Medici.
10 July 1559


THE MURDER OF THE KING AND BURIAL OF TAYLOR.
Judge and revenge my cause o lord
From a Sketch in the Paper Office.

A map drawn after the suspicious death of Mary's second husband at Kirk o'Field

"Such men would always see Mary as a threat who might seek to turn back the religious tide"

abundantly clear that she would not name an heir until she had either married or definitively decided not to marry. Mary was disappointed by such hedging, but it is important to stress that her relationship with Elizabeth was defined by polite tension. Matters would become considerably more strained as the events of the later 1560s began to rapidly unfold.

Elizabeth may have been reluctant to marry, but this did not preclude her vigorous interference in Mary's quest for a husband. The prospect of Mary marrying someone such as Don Carlos, the son of Philip II, was abhorrent, so the Elizabethan regime made various suggestions for a more suitable match including, rather oddly, Elizabeth's intimate Robert Dudley. Mary declined such advice and plumped for Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, a man with his own strong claims to the English succession. They married in July 1565 but Darnley proved to be an unmitigated disaster. He became involved in machinations against his wife, was part of the assassination of Mary's confidante David Riccio in March 1566, and by February 1567 he was dead. The house at Kirk o'Field had been deliberately destroyed with gunpowder and Darnley was found strangled in the grounds.

Elizabeth wrote to Mary expressing sorrow for her cousin's troubles but, with a note of censoriousness, pointed to "such things as are produced to prove yourself the cause of all the same." Worse was to follow. Any talk of a love-match between Mary and the man she married next is misguided. The Earl of Bothwell had to deploy unsavoury methods to win Mary's hand, only securing it after abducting the queen in the spring of 1567. Marriage followed in May, but by now large swathes of the Scottish nobility had grown heartily tired of her antics. Armies were raised and, in July, a captive Mary was forced to abdicate in favour of her infant son James. She was held at Lochleven Fortress, but managed to escape and cross the border into England in May 1568. As she wrote to Elizabeth: "I am now forced out of my kingdom and driven to such straits that, next to God, I have no hope but in your goodness."

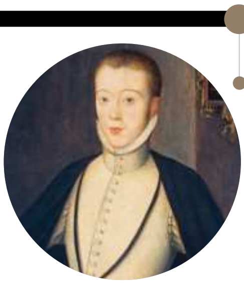
The situation was profoundly awkward for the English queen. Mary had been cast out by her nobles, was widely suspected of being involved in Darnley's mysterious murder, and the risk of her becoming a focus for Catholic disaffection in England was greater than ever. Events in the years immediately following Mary's arrival – the Northern Rebellion of 1569 and the papal excommunication of 1570 – did little to placate Mary's enemies. Thomas Norton found a receptive audience when he described Mary Stuart as someone who had "made shipwreck of all honour and reputation" and whose "own acts publicly known to the world" revealed "of inclination how she is given."

Elizabeth took her duty of care towards a fellow monarch very seriously, however. It was necessary to keep Mary under house arrest, but Elizabeth did not rush to judgement about Mary's past behaviour or future intentions. Commissions of enquiry between October 1569 and January 1570 deployed evidence (now known to have been tampered with and forged) to point towards Mary's role in Darnley's murder, but Elizabeth concluded that nothing had been proven either positively or negatively. But then came the Ridolfi Plot of 1571 – a grand scheme involving a planned invasion with Spanish troops, a rising of English Catholics, the removal of Elizabeth and the accession of Mary, married to the Duke of Norfolk, to the throne.

When Parliament assembled in May 1572, there was much talk of Mary's knowledge and approval of the plot, and over the coming months Elizabeth was provided with startlingly frank advice about how to deal with someone who had allegedly sought the "destruction of our prince". "We see not," the petitioners explained, "but her majesty must needs offend in conscience before God if she do not punish [Mary] according to the measure of her offence in the highest degree." There was no room for partiality or "slack justice", since Mary had "heaped up all the sins of the licentious sons of David: adulteries, murders, conspiracies, treasons and blasphemies against God." She had "altogether forgotten God and all goodness… seeking and devising by all means possible not only to deprive your majesty of all earthly dignities, but also of your natural life."

Various possible objections to killing Mary were tackled. The fact that she was not an English subject was irrelevant and her royal status did not protect her as "the dignity of the person offending increaseth the offence", and there were many precedents for killing errant rulers. Even the "worthy" Joshua had "put to death at one time five kings… causing soldiers

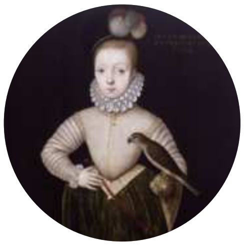
Home once more
Mary returns to Scotland. Following the Treaty of Edinburgh of 6 July 1560, Scotland is ruled by a Protestant regime, but Mary is allowed to worship privately as a Catholic.
19 August 1561

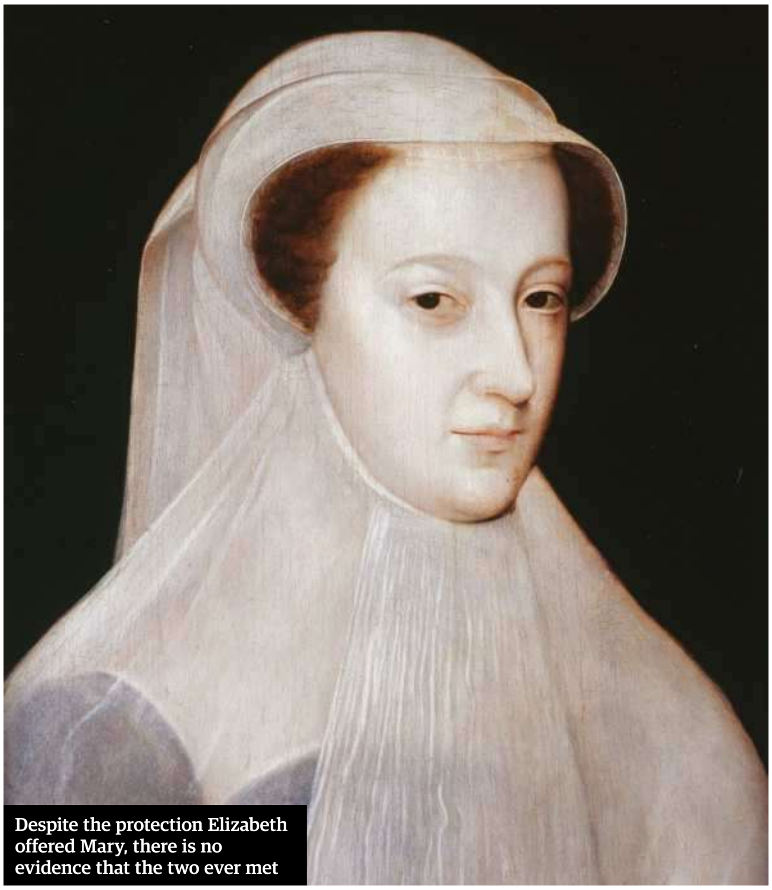


The second husband
Mary makes Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, the Earl of Ross. The couple are married in the chapel of Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh, on 29 July. As a widow, Mary wore a black dress.

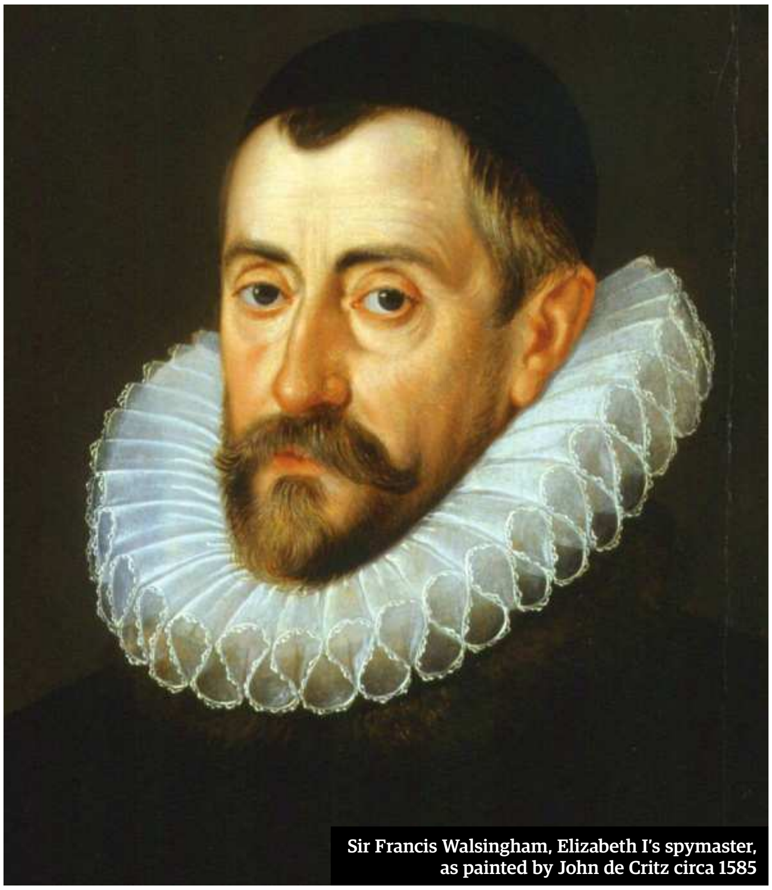
The husband rebels
Mary's confidante David Riccio is murdered as part of a plot against Mary including Darnley. Mary escapes to Dunbar on 11 March, raises an army and returns to power.
9 March 1566

The queen's heir
Mary gives birth to a son, James, the future James VI of Scotland and I of England, at Edinburgh Castle. He is baptised at Stirling Castle on 17 December according to Catholic rites.
19 June 1566





Despite the protection Elizabeth offered Mary, there is no evidence that the two ever met



Sir Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth I's spymaster, as painted by John de Critz circa 1585

"Elizabeth's objections to such drastic action were confronted head on"

to set their feet on their necks and slay them". Elizabeth was not willing to sacrifice Mary, opting to placate her subjects by allowing the execution of the Duke of Norfolk. The queen appears to have regarded protecting Mary as her public duty, both as a relative and as a fellow monarch - but what of their private relationship? Many letters between the two survive and, while often hemmed in by protocol and politesse, they contain many glimpses of the steady souring of relations through the period of Mary's enforced sojourn in England.

At first, Mary was full of gratitude "for the honourable respect and courteous entertainment that I have received since my arrival," but even at this date there were complaints. Before long she was grumbling about her servants being searched at the borders, believing all manner of rumours about Elizabeth supporting her enemies in Scotland, and announcing, "the state of my affairs constrains me to speak to you this freely." Before the decade was out, Mary was insisting that "I have trusted in you… I have undertaken nothing but what you have advised" and sought "to obey you as a daughter would a mother." She could not understand the "unloving treatment" she had received. Criticism and veiled threats were unlikely to impress Elizabeth, but Mary was undeterred: "This I entreat you, not to compel me to hold different opinion of you than that which till now I have wished to maintain of so near a relative", adding that "I require succour; or else I shall be compelled to seek for it where God shall direct me."

Elizabeth was not the sort of monarch one inflicted an 'or else' clause upon and, as the 1570s unfolded, she grew increasingly irritated by Mary's petulance. The English queen reminded Mary that she had always "discharged the office of a good kinswoman" and was clearly offended by the "heap of confused troubled thoughts" stemming from Mary's pen. It was far wiser, Elizabeth suggested, "to believe and trust rather to me in all your difficulties" rather than "either bruits of the brainless vulgar or the viperous backbiters of the sowers of discord." By February 1572, after receiving a "long letter" from Mary "with multitude of sharp and injurious words," Elizabeth reminded her cousin "That it is not the manner to obtain good things with evil speeches." As the frequency of letters from Elizabeth declined, Mary fell back on tantrums, explaining in January 1574 that she had not written for some while "for fear of importuning you, since my letters have not latterly been thought worthy of a reply from you."

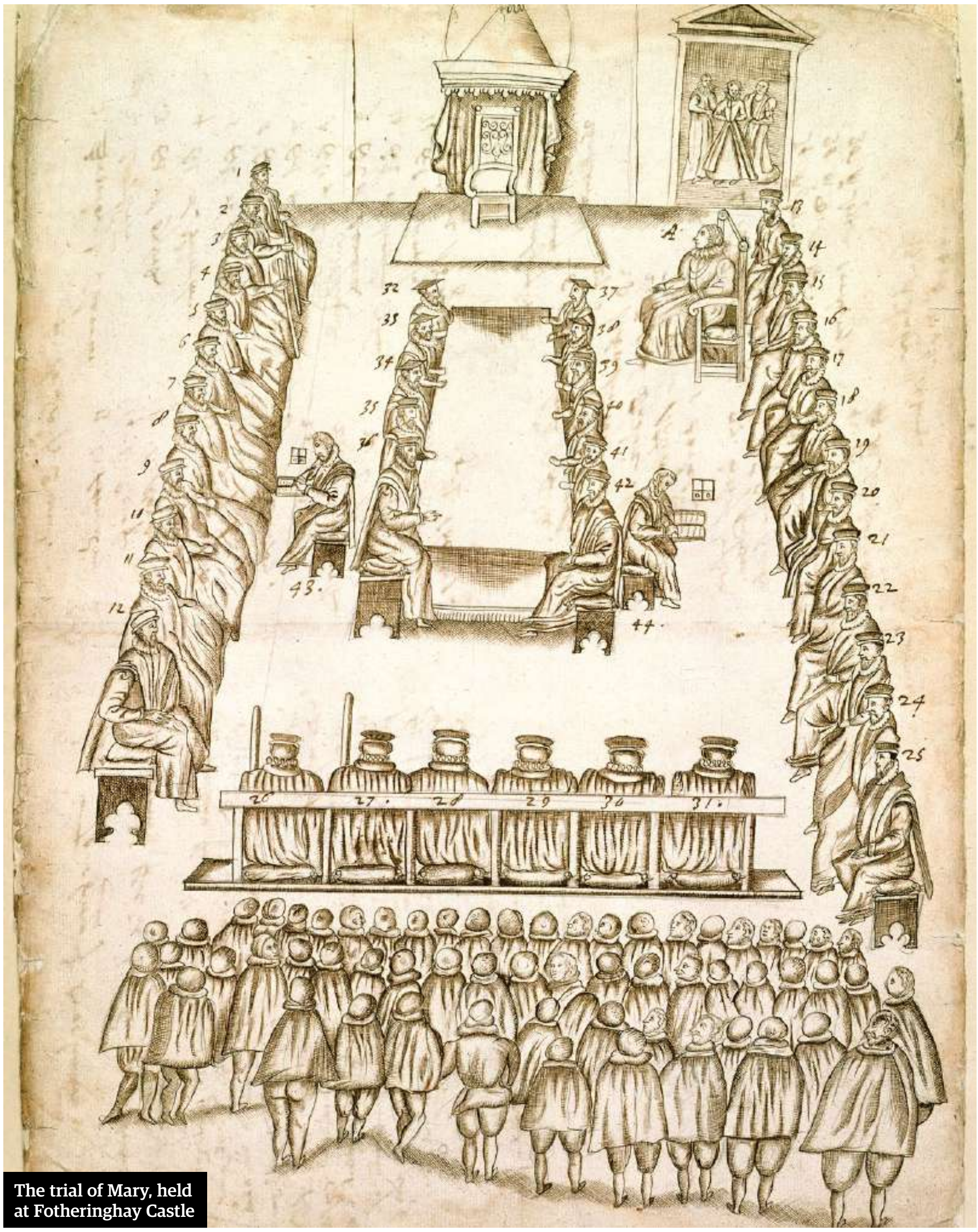
The mutual resentment simmered on, with Mary becoming exasperated by the vanishing possibility of her restoration to the Scottish throne and saddened by the mounting estrangement from her son - and then the plots returned. First came

The queen: a killer?
An explosion caused by gunpowder destroys the house at Kirk o'Field, near Edinburgh. Darnley's body is found in a nearby orchard, strangled but unharmed by the explosion.
10 February 1567

The third husband
Leading nobles lend support to the idea of the Earl of Bothwell marrying Mary. After Mary refuses, Bothwell abducts her and she agrees to the marriage, returning to Edinburgh on 6 May.
20 April 1567

A captured queen
Mary and Bothwell marry at Holyroodhouse and disgruntled nobles soon begin to raise armies. On 15 June, Mary surrenders and is confined at Lochleven Fortress.
15 May 1567

The heir takes over
Mary is forced to abdicate under threats that she will be killed if she does not comply. Her son James becomes King James VI of Scotland and is crowned on 29 July.
24 July 1567



The trial of Mary, held at Fotheringhay Castle

the Throckmorton Conspiracy in 1583, with its dreams of an invasion force led by the Duke of Guise removing Elizabeth from the throne. It is difficult to gauge the level of Mary's knowledge or backing, but some of her chief supporters were clearly involved. Thousands of Elizabeth's subjects were sufficiently alarmed to instigate the Bond of Association in 1584, whereby they swore to prosecute to death any pretender in whose name an assassination attempt against Elizabeth was launched.

In March 1585, Mary signed off a letter to Elizabeth as "your humble and affectionate, but desolate, sister and cousin." The sense of despair is unmistakable. Mary tells of her "misled child" and those who sought "to sever him from me as they have laboured so earnestly since long ago." She writes that she is more than happy to abandon any hope of being the successor and wonders if she might be allowed to travel "out of this isle into some solitary place."

Mary's enemies had no intention of allowing such dreams to be fulfilled and, with the Babington Plot of 1586, they found their opportunity to strike. This latest conspiracy was real enough, with the familiar goals of killing Elizabeth and replacing her with Mary, but when the government caught wind of the plans they did not move to shut them down. Rather, they infiltrated the plotters' ranks and allowed lines of communication to be opened up with Mary. Letters to and from Mary were hidden in beer barrels delivered to Chartley House, but they would be copied, deciphered when necessary and sent on to the mastermind of Elizabethan intelligence, Francis Walsingham. When Anthony Babington wrote to Mary on 6 July informing her of his plans, Walsingham knew all about it. When Mary replied on 17 July, Walsingham was delighted. Mary had written of her awareness of "the affair being thus prepared" and showed no resistance to the "accomplishing of their design".

Mary was tried and found guilty at a commission just months later in October. In its wake, Parliament met. It was time, as one speaker succinctly put it, to "take away this most wicked and filthy woman with justice." Petitions were again raised to execute Mary, and Elizabeth's objections were confronted head on. The Scottish queen was "only a cousin to you in a remote degree, but we be sons and children of this land whereof you be not only the natural mother, but also the wedded spouse."

If Elizabeth refused to act, there would be dreadful consequences: "In sparing her, your majesty shall not only give courage and hardiness to the enemies of God, of your majesty, and of your kingdom, but shall discomfort and daunt with despair the hearts of your loving people and deservedly provoke the heavy hand and wrath of God."

Once more, however, Elizabeth prevaricated. In a speech on 24 November, in direct response to the petitions, she explained that, "I have strived more this day than ever in my life whether I should speak or use silence." At this stage, she could only provide what she described as an "answer answerless" to the question of what she would or would not do to Mary. Perhaps this was heartfelt confusion, or maybe a way of advertising the queen's instincts for clemency ahead of making the decision, but few doubted how it was going to end. By 4 December, the death warrant had been drawn up. In the same month, Mary wrote to Elizabeth with resignation: "You will

Escaping Scotland
Mary escapes from Lochleven and, after abortive military efforts, crosses the border into England on 16 May. She spends the remainder of her life under house arrest.
2 May 1568

Innocent or guilty?
Conferences are held at York and Westminster to assess Mary's possible role in the murder of Lord Darnley. Elizabeth declares that neither Mary's guilt nor innocence has been proven.
October 1568-January 1569

More uprisings
The Northern Rising led by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland takes place. While Mary has no direct involvement in the plot she is moved further south.
November 1569

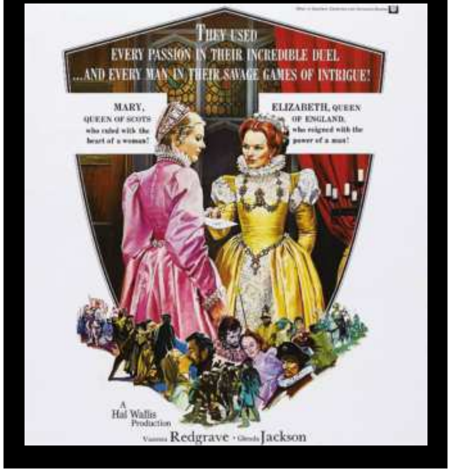
A plot is uncovered
The so-called Ridolfi Plot aims to provoke rebellion among English Catholics with a Spanish invasion and Mary on the throne after a marriage to the Duke of Norfolk.
March 1571

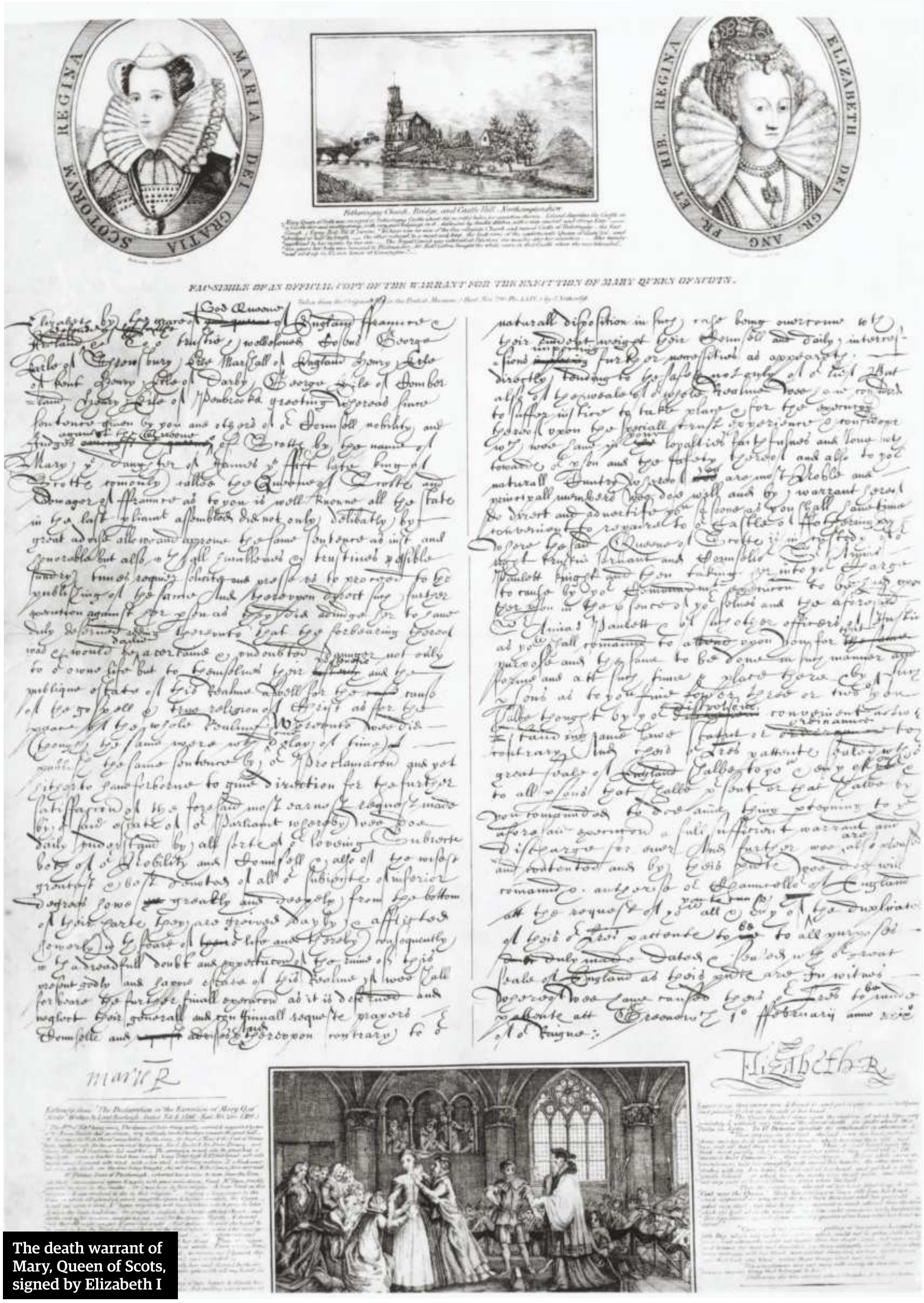
Mary and Elizabeth in culture

How have the queens been portrayed over time?

Portrayals of the relationship between Mary and lizabeth, in both high art and popular culture, have rarely been overly concerned with historical accuracy. The two women never met in person, which is a nuisance for anyone interested in a dramatic storyline, so encounters have routinely been concocted. It happens in Schiller's play Maria Stuart, and twice in the 1971 film Mary, Queen of Scots, starring Glenda Jackson as Elizabeth and Vanessa Redgrave in the title role. Martha Graham's 1985 dance piece Episodes saw the two queens strive to resolve their differences over a game of tennis but most of the fictitious meetings have tended towards the more passionate end of the spectrum.

In Donizetti's opera Maria Stuarda, insults are hurled with abandon and on one occasion this had regrettable results. The singer playing Mary aims harsh words at her rival: "Impure daughter of Anne Boleyn, do you speak of dishonour? Prostitute – unworthy and obscene, I blush for you. The throne of England is sullied by your feet, vile bastard!" During one early rehearsal, these lines were delivered with such gusto that the singer playing Elizabeth took personal offence and the two divas fell to blows. Caricature is common, with Mary usually being positioned as either an innocent victim or a love-struck political pawn, but only an exceptional historical double-act could have managed to inspire artists as diverse as Robert Schumann, Lou Reed and Liz Lochhead.


THEY USED EVERY PASSION IN THEIR INCREDIBLE DUEL ...AND EVERY MAN IN THEIR SAVAGE GAMES OF INTRIGUE!
MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS who ruled with the heart of a woman!
ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF ENGLAND, who reigned with the power of a man!
A Hal Wallis Production
Vanessa Redgrave · Glenda Jackson


MARIA DEI GRATIA SCOTORVM REGINA
ELIZABETH DEI GRA. ANG. FR. ET HIB. REGINA
FACSIMILE OF AN OFFICIAL COPY OF THE WARRANT FOR THE EXECUTION OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.
Marie R
Elizabeth R

The death warrant of Mary, Queen of Scots, signed by Elizabeth I

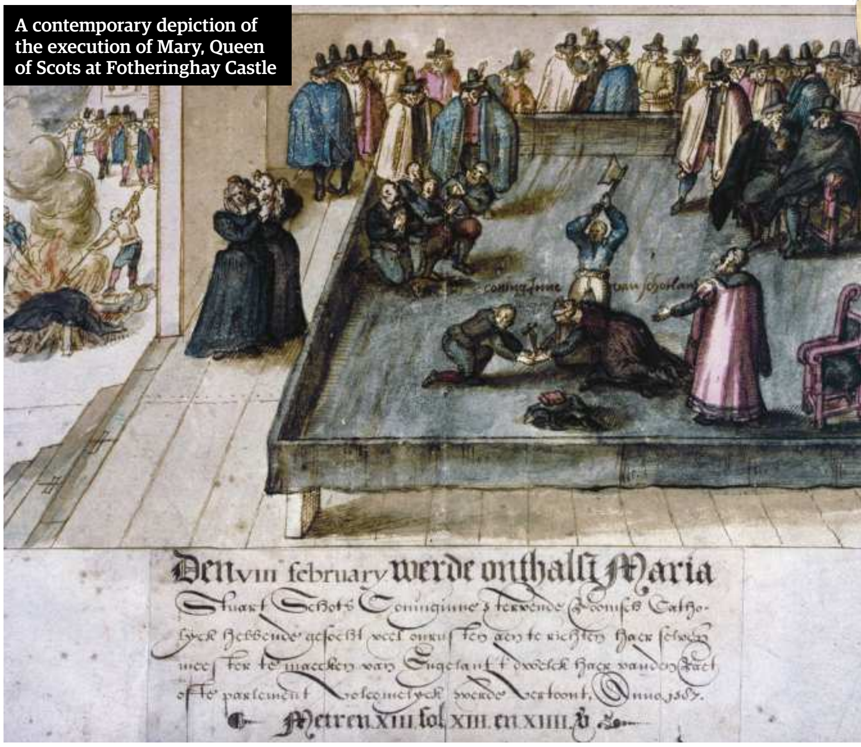
Appeasing Parliament
Parliament meets to discuss Mary with various calls for either her execution or formal exclusion from the succession. Elizabeth consents to the execution of Norfolk to calm the waters.
May-June 1572

Catholic scheming
The Throckmorton Plot is revealed, the goal of which was for the Duke of Guise to invade England with Spanish support and replace Elizabeth I with Mary, Queen of Scots.
November 1583

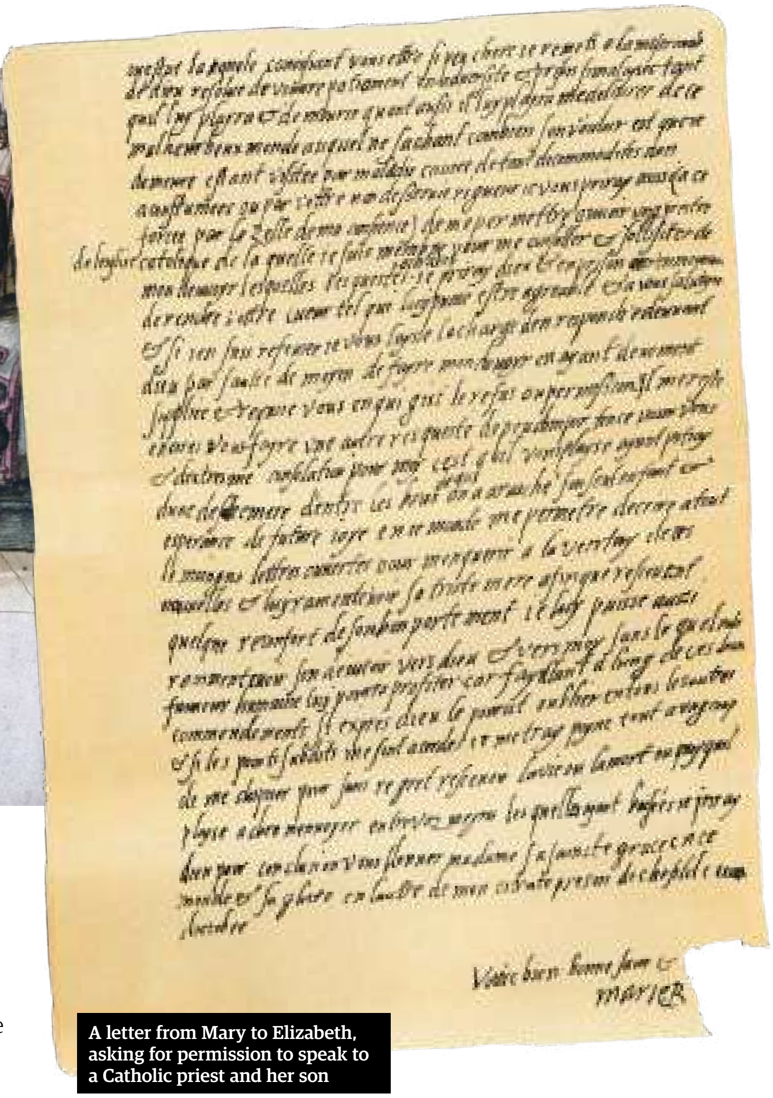
End the pretenders
The Bond of Association is established. This involved taking an oath to prosecute to death any pretender in whose name an assassination attempt against Elizabeth is launched.
19 October 1584

Imprisoned queen
Mary is brought under more restrictive imprisonment and moved from Tutbury Castle to Chartley Hall, Staffordshire, in December. She remained there for nine months.

Another Catholic plot
The Babington Plot, with the aim of assassinating Elizabeth, takes place. The English government is fully aware of the machinations and attempts to make Mary implicate herself.
March-July 1586


Den VIII february werde onthalst Maria

A contemporary depiction of the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots at Fotheringhay Castle


Votre bien bonne sœur &
MARIE R

A letter from Mary to Elizabeth, asking for permission to speak to a Catholic priest and her son

credit or disbelieve my discourse as it seems best to you." She was "resolved to strengthen myself in Christ Jesus alone" who had already carried her through so many "unjust calumnies, accusations and condemnations". She was referring to herself as a martyr-in-waiting, coming to the end of her "long and weary pilgrimage".

We can only speculate about what Elizabeth was thinking through these difficult months, as petitioners arrived from France and Scotland hoping to intercede on Mary's behalf. Mary's enemies at court grew impatient but, on 1 February, Elizabeth finally signed the death warrant. She claimed to have told her secretary of state to keep it safe but also appears to have indicated that she wanted to hear no more about the matter. To add more confusion, a suggestion arose that Mary's gaoler might quietly do away with her, but he refused. Faced with so much uncertainty, the Privy Council elected to seal and send the death warrant to Fotheringhay Castle, where Mary was being held.

Mary was executed on the morning of 8 February and by the afternoon bells were ringing and celebratory bonfires burning in London. Elizabeth fell into a frenzy of grief, lashing out at the councillors who had sent the warrant to the castle. Perhaps this was genuine anger, perhaps stage-managed, or maybe derived from a sense of guilt for an action for which she could not avoid responsibility.

From that day to this, judgements of Mary have been sharply divided. For Richard Crompton, writing shortly after the execution, "She was the only hope of all discontented subjects, she was the foundation whereon all the evil disposed did build, she was the root from which all rebellions and treacheries did spring." The Jesuit Robert Southwell saw things differently, giving voice to Mary in one of his poems:

Alive a queen, now dead I am a saint;
Once Mary called, my name now martyr is;
From earthly reign debarred by restraint,
In lieu whereof I live in heaven's bliss.

As one might expect, Job Throckmorton declared that "it was, out of all question, a very worthy act that was lately done at Fotheringay." Not that Mary's demise brought an end to his outbursts. Just a few weeks after Mary's death, he turned his sights on foreign policy and offered bitter denunciations of polities around Europe. Spain was the enemy du jour, so we can assume that no one was particularly perturbed when the MP announced that the nation was "possessed by an incestuous race of bastards", but taking pot shots at friendly countries was a different matter. He despaired of Scotland being ruled by "so young and wavering a head", and his attack on France likely took some members' breath away. The French king, he averred, was "stricken with a fearful kind of giddiness, as it were a man in a trance or kind of ecstasy", but what could one expect from the descendants of someone like Catherine de' Medici?

This time around, Throckmorton's venom was deemed untimely. His speech was denounced as "lewd and blasphemous" and he was advised that it was best not to speak "sharply of princes"; it was important to "use great regard of princes in free speech." Such courtesy, as those present at the admonishment must have realised, had rarely been extended to Mary, Queen of Scots.

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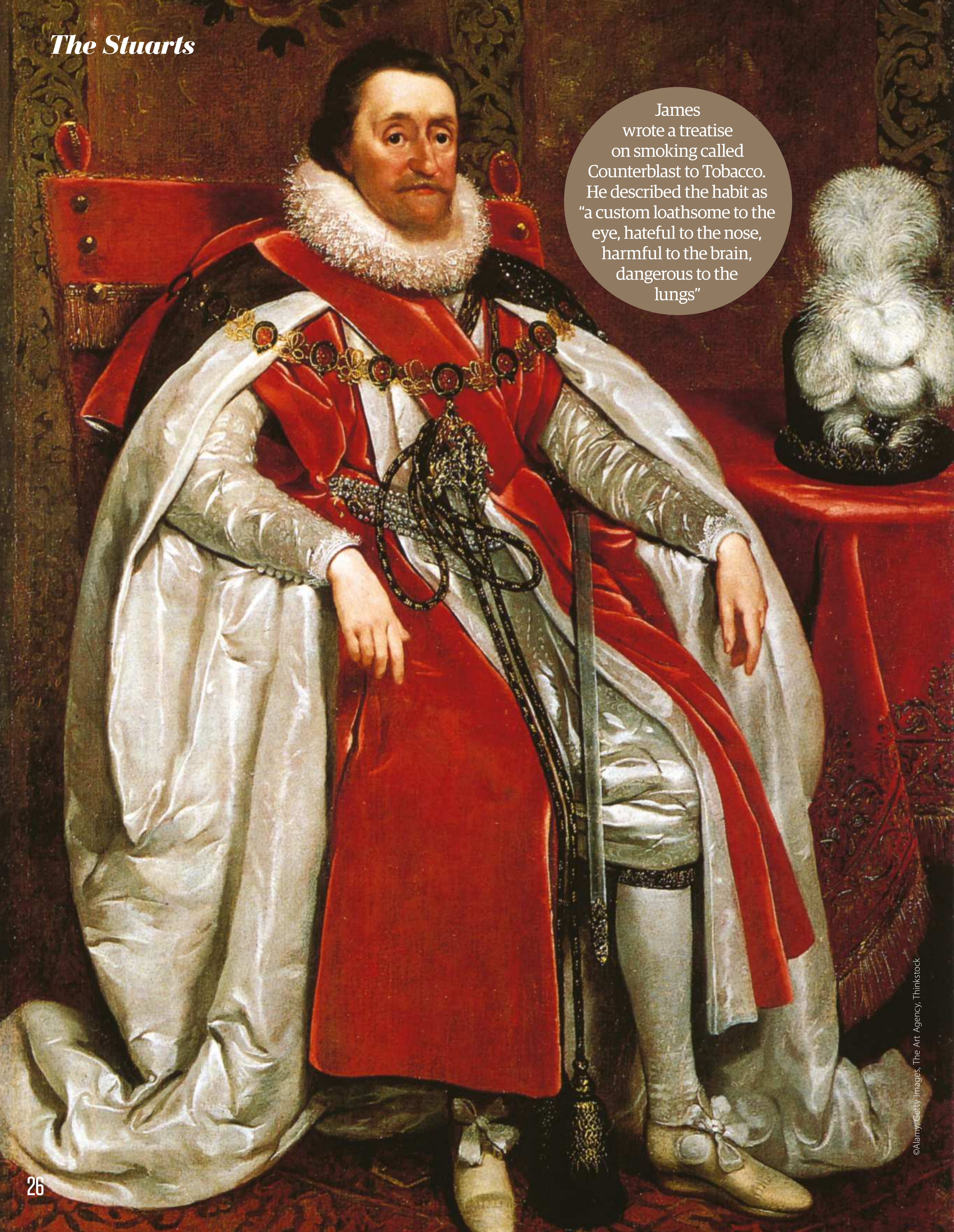
Mary is implicated
Babington writes to Mary, who replies on 17 July, giving Walsingham the ammunition he needs to implicate them both. Babington and his co-conspirators are executed on 20 September.
6 July 1586

To kill a queen?
A commission to try Mary is established and she's moved to Fotheringhay Castle. A hearing takes place on 14-15 October, followed by proceedings in Star Chamber on 25 October.
9 September 1586

Declared to die
Parliament assembles and petitions for Mary's execution on 12 and 24 November. After being convicted, her death sentence is proclaimed on 4 December.
29 October 1586

1587

Off with her head
Elizabeth reluctantly signs Mary's death warrant. Mary Stuart is executed at Fotheringhay Castle on 8 February aged 44 like, in her own words, "a common criminal".
1 February 1587



James wrote a treatise on smoking called Counterblast to Tobacco. He described the habit as "a custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs"

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INTRODUCING

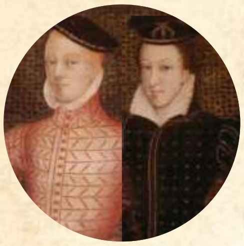
James I

The first Stuart king of England, James I was loved but renowned for his poor decision-making skills

Timeline

1566

James is born
James is born at Edinburgh Castle to Mary, Queen of Scots and her second husband Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley.
19 June 1566



James VI of Scotland
James' mother Mary, Queen of Scots is forced to abdicate and flee south by the Scottish nobility after the suspicious death of her husband. Her son is crowned King James VI at the age of one. He is taken into the care of powerful Protestants to ensure he does not follow his mother's Catholic beliefs.
27 July 1567

Mary, Queen of Scots executed
James' mother Mary is executed by Elizabeth I for treason. James raises only a token complaint.
8 February 1587

Anne of Denmark
James marries the Protestant Anne of Denmark. The couple go on to have seven children, although they did drift apart.
August 1589

The True Law of Free Monarchies
James pens a political treatise on the divine right of kings, eloquently arguing that a monarch is above the law and answerable only to God.
1598

James I of England
Queen Elizabeth I dies after ruling for almost 45 years. Having refused to name an heir, her Scottish cousin is the most viable claimant and becomes James I of England at the age of 37. He brings years of experience as a competent ruler and a reputation as a scholar.
24 March 1603

Hampton Court conference
After being presented with the Millenary Petition by members of the clergy seeking reforms, James holds an ecclesiastical conference to debate the state of the church. James uses the three-day event to air his oratory skills and establish a religious settlement. He accepts only modest religious reforms.
14-16 January 1604

King of Great Britain
James I pushes for an official union of Scotland and England. The English Parliament grudgingly agrees to establish a commission to look into union with Scotland, while the Scottish oppose, fearing they will be marginalised. James declares himself 'King of Great Britain' in defiance of Parliament's rejection of the title.
20 October 1604

Treaty of London
Years of war with Spain come to an end. James intends to secure an era of peace by acting as a mediator. He gains the nickname 'Rex Pacificus' – the peaceful king.
August 1604

The Gunpowder Plot
A plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament by a group of Catholics is uncovered. Guy Fawkes is discovered near Parliament in a chamber full of gunpowder after one of the conspirators sent anonymous notes to Catholic lords warning them to stay away, leading to a man-hunt. The conspirators are executed.
5 November 1605

TURN TO PAGE 34

Bate's Case ruling
A legal case against a merchant ends in the judge ruling that it is a royal prerogative to levy impositions on trade without parliamentary approval. The ruling is resented by Parliament, whose only influence over the monarch is through control of royal finances.
November 1606

Union rejected
The commission into union with Scotland makes moderate proposals but almost all of them are rejected by Parliament.
1607

Colony in America
England's first permanent colony in the Americas is established. It is named Jamestown in the king's honour.
September 1607

James dissolves Parliament
Parliament discusses the 'Great Contract', whereby Parliament would grant a new source of revenue to the king and a sum to pay off the royal debts. In return James would abandon unpopular royal rights, but amid mutual recriminations Parliament is dissolved.
October 1610

James I Bible
As a result of the Hampton Court conference the Bible is translated into English, and the 'King James Bible' is distributed.
May 1611

Elizabeth marries Frederick
James marries his daughter Elizabeth to Frederick, the Protestant Elector of the Palatinate, as part of a wider strategy to mediate conflict in Europe.
May 1612

The Addled Parliament
With royal debt worsening, James calls Parliament for the first time in four years. In a distrustful atmosphere nothing is achieved and James angrily dissolves Parliament again.
April 1614

Thirty Years' War and Parliament recalled
Parliament is recalled to discuss subsidies to intervene militarily in Europe, after Frederick II becomes involved in the Thirty Years' War when he accepts the Bohemian crown against the Austrian Habsburgs' wishes and is defeated in battle. The imbalance between Protestant and Catholic power plunges Europe deeper into war.
January 1621

Charles goes to Spain
Charles, James' heir, travels to Madrid with the king's favourite, George Villiers, in a clumsy bid to woo the Spanish infanta Maria Ana and form an alliance with Catholic Spain. James hopes an alliance can strengthen his position as a mediator. Negotiations fail, and Charles returns demanding war with Spain.
March 1623

1625

James dies
James dies at the age of 58, having ruled Scotland for 57 years and England for 22. His son Charles inherits both crowns, a huge royal debt and a fractious political situation that needs a highly skilled political operator to control.
27 March 1625

James and the witches

After personal experience of black magic – or so he thought – King James waged a vigorous war against witchcraft

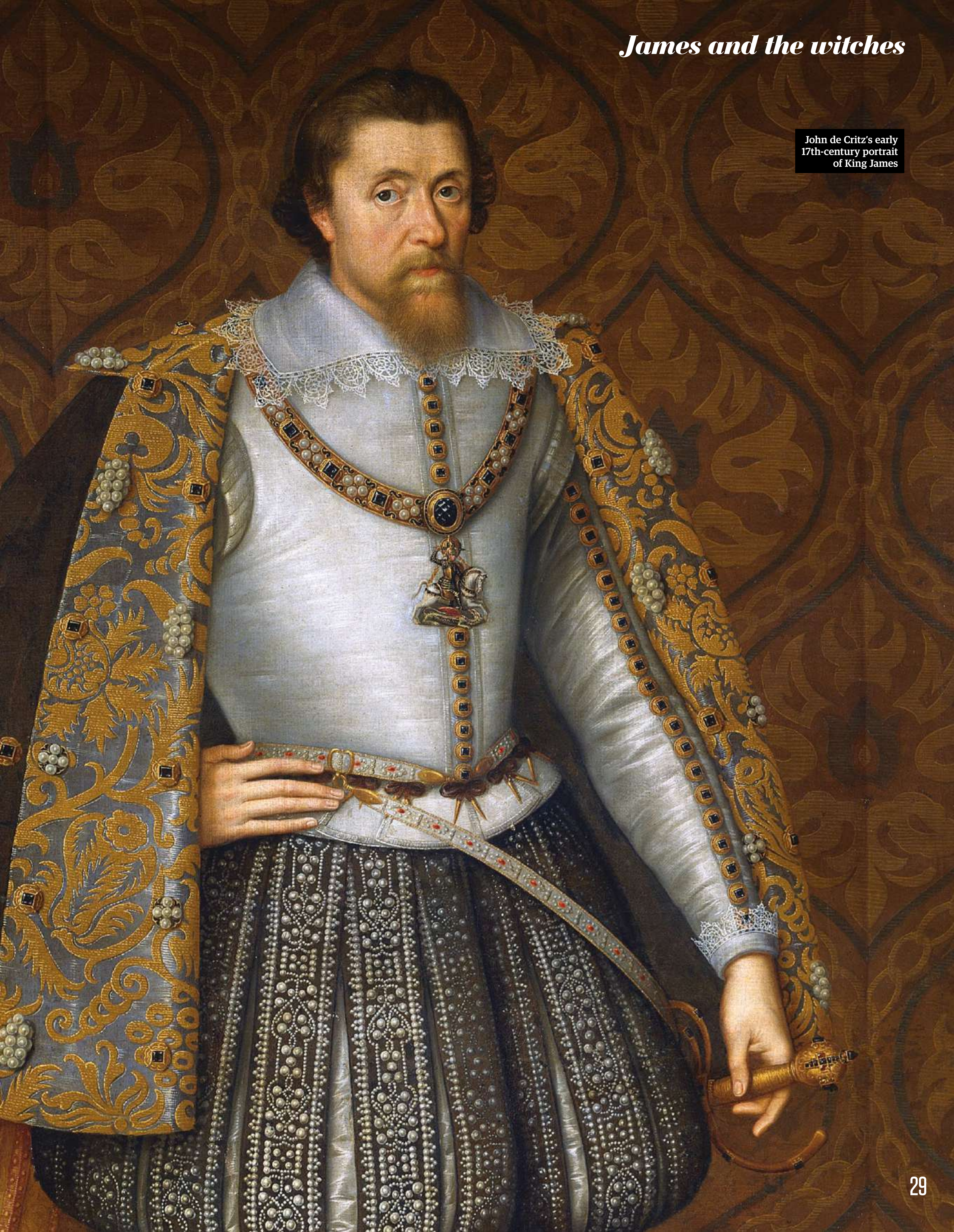
The fearful abounding at this time in this country, of these detestable slaves of the Devil, the Witches or enchanters, hath moved me (beloved reader) to dispatch in post, this following treatise of mine, not in any way (as I protest) to serve for a show of my learning and ingenuity, but only (moved of conscience) to press thereby, so far as I can, to resolve the doubting hearts of many; both that such assaults of Satan are most certainly practiced, and that the instruments thereof, merit most severely to be punished."

So began the preface to a remarkable book published in Edinburgh in 1597. *Daemonologie* was remarkable for two reasons: it was a product of the most serious witch mania ever to erupt in Britain, and it was written by a reigning British monarch. What prompted the King of Scotland to venture, personally, into the campaign against black magic? There seem to be three causes that impelled him to take up his pen.

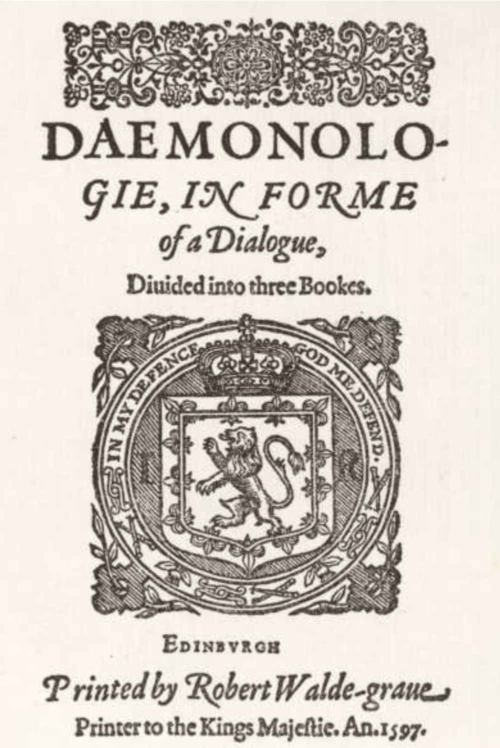
The first and most deep-seated was James's belief in his own intellectual talent. He was a natural scholar, inquisitive, well-read and argumentative, and had a particular fascination for theology, believing that, as a king and savant, he had a responsibility to impart wisdom to his people. Secondly, he deemed himself to have been the object of a specific satanic attack in 1589, something that made a deep impression on him. Thirdly, he was always on the watch for treachery and treason, and maintained that potential enemies of the crown were motivated by demonic forces.

James Stuart was King of Scotland from the age of one. His mother, Mary, Queen of Scots, was forced to abdicate in July 1567 and the boy, therefore, had no pattern of kingship on which to model himself. His upbringing was entrusted to a succession of regents from warring factions and he was subjected to a rigid educational regime by tutors of whom the chief was the gifted but irascible Presbyterian, George Buchanan. By his mid-teens, James had mastered Latin, Greek and French and was thoroughly grounded in the Bible and Calvinist doctrine. His undoubted academic ability was coupled with a profound sense of his divine right as ruler, so his opinions had the support (as he believed) not only of reason, but also of God.

Belief in and fear of witchcraft had roots in folk religion and both Catholic and Protestant theology. For centuries in Europe, it had been generally assumed that the exponents of magic were divided into two groups: there were wise women and men (wise-ards or wizards) who were experts in herbal remedies and practised benign 'white' magic, and those who turned to maleficium, black magic, which brought misfortune on its victims. Then, in the 1480s, the situation changed drastically. The Catholic Church, increasingly embroiled in a war with heretics of various kinds, changed the definition of witchcraft. The focus was no longer on the good or



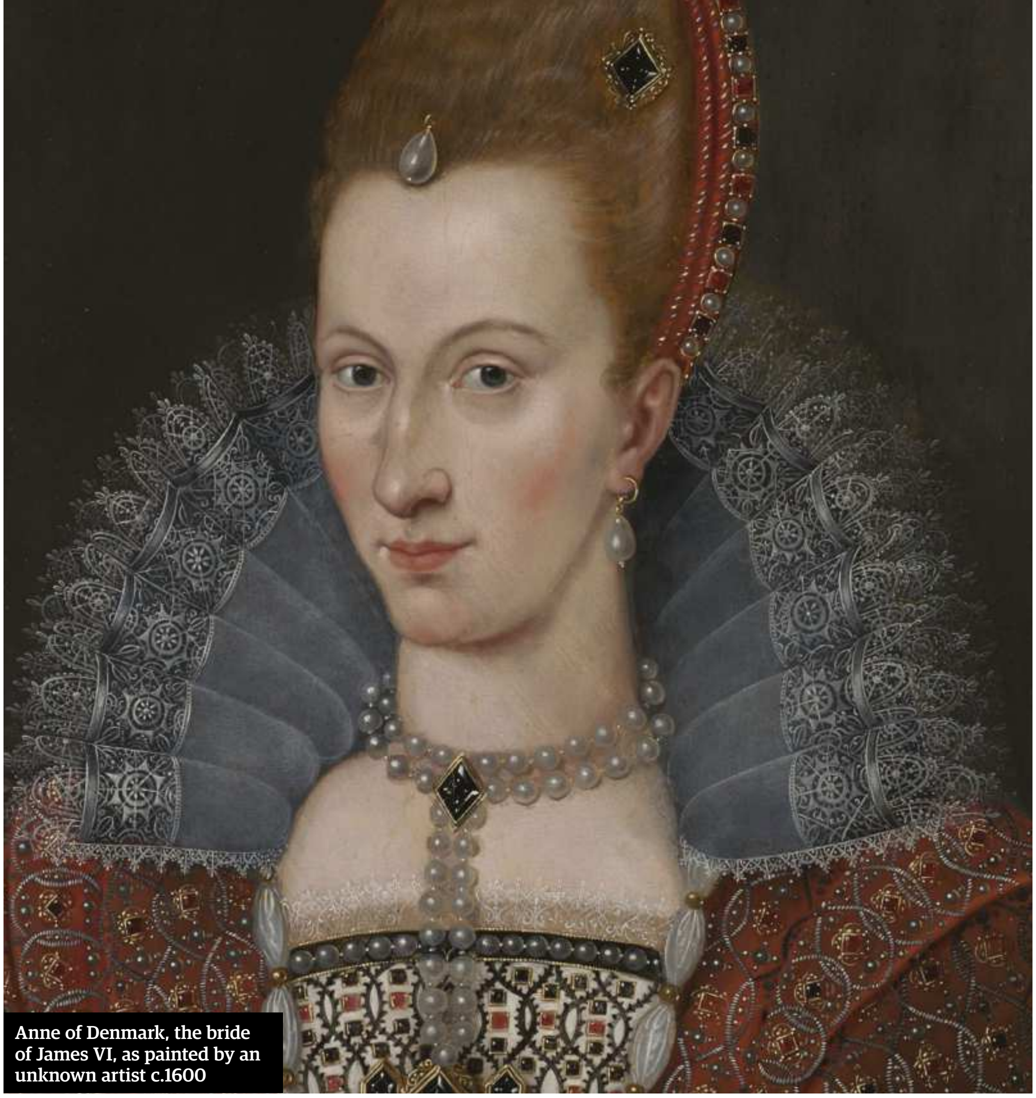
John de Critz's early 17th-century portrait of King James



DAEMONOLO-
GIE, IN FORME
of a Dialogue,
Diuided into three Bookes.

EDINBVRGH
Printed by Robert Walde-graue.
Printer to the Kings Majeſtie. An.1597.

The title page of Daemonologie by King James VI



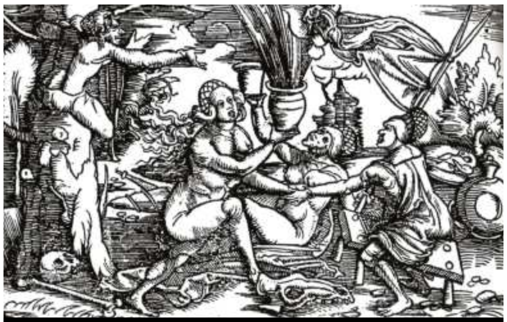
Anne of Denmark, the bride of James VI, as painted by an unknown artist c.1600

bad effects produced by magical means but on the origin of the powers claimed by witches and wizards. Pope Innocent VIII decreed that such people had made a pact with Satan or his agents. If found guilty by an ecclesiastical court, these enemies of God were to be handed over to the secular authorities for execution – usually by burning in continental Europe. An officially approved handbook, the *Malleus Maleficarum*, was published, which gave details of how witches could be identified and how they should be investigated (a process including torture). Rolling off the new printing presses in great numbers, it became a bestseller and by 1600 it had gone through 28 editions. Its description of witchcraft was one of the very few topics on which Catholics and Protestants agreed during the Reformation, and the result was outbreaks of witch mania and the execution of thousands of victims, most of whom were women.

However, persecution was not universal: the British Isles was one area that largely escaped the frenzy and the *Malleus Maleficarum* was not translated into English. That is not to say that the governments in Westminster and Edinburgh were not concerned with the problem – witchcraft acts were passed in both parliaments in 1563, but the one drafted north of the border was more draconian and classed both the practice of witchcraft and the consulting of witches as capital offences. However, over the next 25 years there were few prosecutions and even fewer actual convictions. This was the situation when the complex events of 1587-91 began.

James's rule was still rendered precarious by faction fighting among the Scottish nobles. Prominent among them was Francis Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell (c.1562-1612) who, as an illegitimate son of James V, was the stepbrother of James's mother, Mary, Queen of Scots. Mary had for many years been enjoying the 'hospitality' of Elizabeth I and had been the focus of several plots against the English queen, who reluctantly ordered her execution in February 1587. Bothwell was outraged and campaigned vigorously for a war of revenge, but was indignant to discover that James had no taste for such a conflict.

In the following year, the earl saw another opportunity for his anti-English policy: the Spanish Armada, having failed to invade England, was being forced north, around the Scottish coast. James appointed Bothwell to the post of Lord Admiral with instructions to attack the Spanish vessels, but the earl had other ideas. He planned to enlist the support of King Philip's ships and men in a secondary attack on England. His plot involved raising his own armed force, alliances with Catholic nobles on both sides of the border and messages to Madrid. When the scheme fell apart, James had its ringleader imprisoned but, with remarkable, even foolhardy, forbearance, he restored Bothwell to favour in September 1589. The king had something more important to think about, after all – he was about to marry a Danish princess. It is with the arrangements for his wedding to Anne, sister of Christian IV of Denmark, that our story takes a bizarre twist – involving witchcraft.



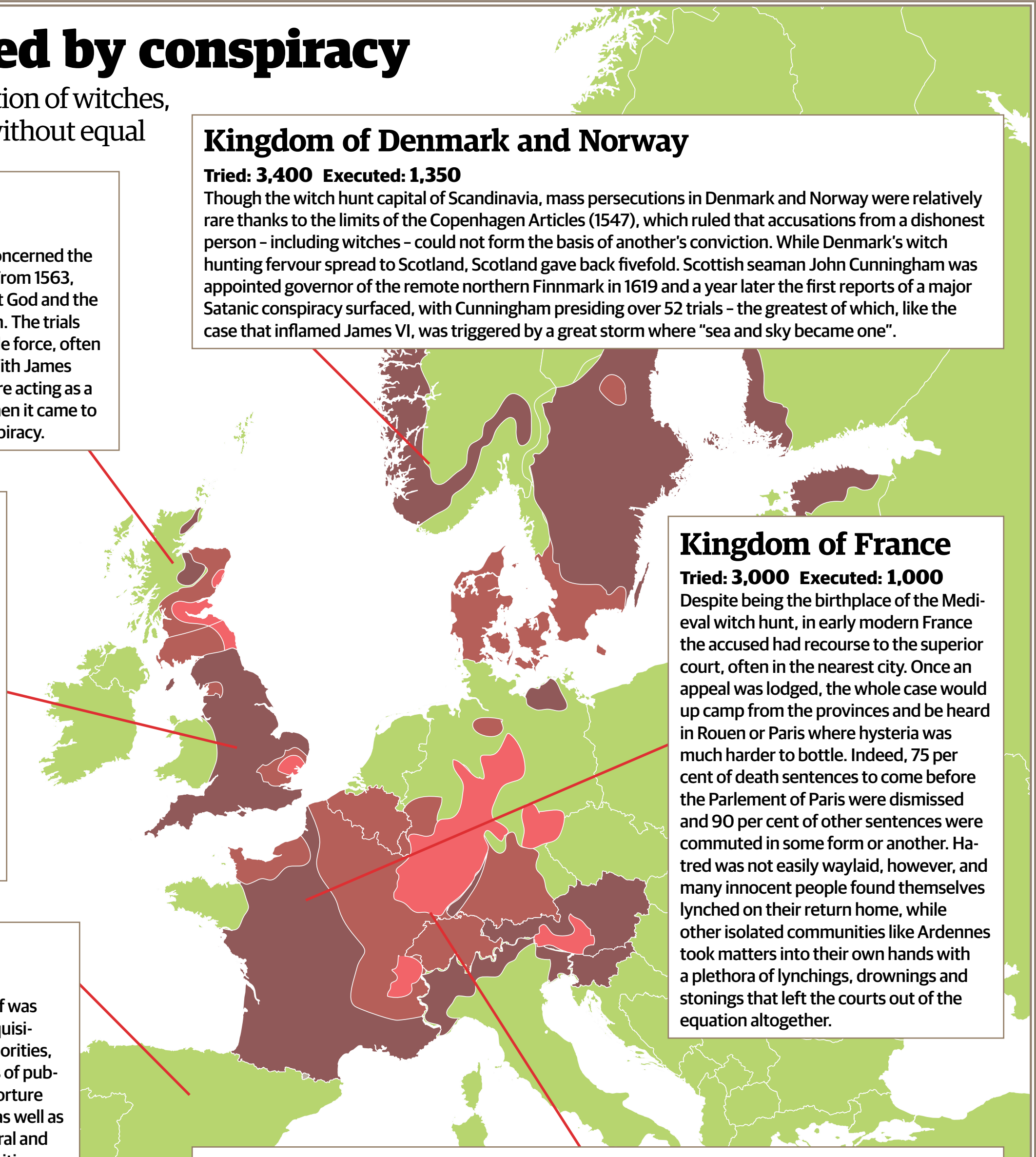
Witches were viewed as agents of the devil and persecuted across Europe

The 15-year-old princess set out from Copenhagen in a convoy bound for Edinburgh, but severe storms forced her ships to head for shelter on the Norwegian coast. There was nothing unusual about autumnal gales in this region, but James felt that he was being balked and set off in October to fetch his bride himself. He spent six months at the Danish court, where he hugely relished intellectual debate

"Leading Lutheran theologians were totally committed to the concept of spiritual warfare"

A continent gripped by conspiracy

Scotland wasn't unique in the persecution of witches, but the role played by the crown was without equal



Kingdom of Scotland

Tried: 4,000-6,000 Executed: 1,500

Unlike their neighbours, it wasn't purely maleficium that concerned the Scottish church and crown, it was the act of sorcery itself. From 1563, witchcraft and consulting with witches were crimes against God and the crown – capital offences and therefore punishable by death. The trials were held in secular courts, but the Kirk was an unstoppable force, often responsible for evidence gathering and the prosecution. With James VI's feelings on the matter well known and his own literature acting as a guide, judges knew exactly what was expected of them when it came to laying down the law on matters of great goat-headed conspiracy.

Kingdom of England

Tried: 1,000 Executed: 500

An Act Against Conjurations, Enchantments and Witchcrafts (1563) made a felony of maleficium, death or harm caused by witchcraft and any attempt to foresee the fate of the queen (Elizabeth I proved as paranoid as her father in that respect). Hanging awaited those found guilty of causing death or of peering too closely into her majesty's tea leaves, while those convicted of causing harm faced a year's imprisonment and pillory – a second offence would be life. The vast majority of witchcraft cases were tried in the assizes and, while local juries were prone to hysteria, the judges – often from London – were more inclined to let their learning guide them in the face of rural superstition. A majority of those executed for witchcraft were the result of Matthew Hopkins' activities between 1644-7.

Kingdom of Spain

Tried: 2,000 Executed: 100

Despite the religious terrors of earlier centuries, Spain itself was a relatively sober affair. Wherever possible, the Spanish Inquisition wrestled control of witch trials away from secular authorities, sweeping away with them the anarchic Medieval traditions of public justice in favour of closed witness sessions under both torture and the scrutiny of hardened inquisitors, often great legal as well as ecclesiastical minds. Although panic flourished in the cultural and linguistic frontier of the Basque Country in 1609, the Inquisition remained sceptical with one brother, Alonso de Salazar, remarking sardonically of the flood of denunciations that "These claims go beyond all human reason and may even pass the limits permitted by the Devil." In 1614 the Inquisition ruled that confession and accusation alone would not be sufficient proof of witchcraft.

KEY

- ◆ **Locations that experienced severe persecution**
- ◆ **Locations that experienced moderate persecution**
- ◆ **Locations that experienced light persecution**

Kingdom of Denmark and Norway

Tried: 3,400 Executed: 1,350

Though the witch hunt capital of Scandinavia, mass persecutions in Denmark and Norway were relatively rare thanks to the limits of the Copenhagen Articles (1547), which ruled that accusations from a dishonest person – including witches – could not form the basis of another's conviction. While Denmark's witch hunting fervour spread to Scotland, Scotland gave back fivefold. Scottish seaman John Cunningham was appointed governor of the remote northern Finnmark in 1619 and a year later the first reports of a major Satanic conspiracy surfaced, with Cunningham presiding over 52 trials – the greatest of which, like the case that inflamed James VI, was triggered by a great storm where "sea and sky became one".

Kingdom of France

Tried: 3,000 Executed: 1,000

Despite being the birthplace of the Medieval witch hunt, in early modern France the accused had recourse to the superior court, often in the nearest city. Once an appeal was lodged, the whole case would up camp from the provinces and be heard in Rouen or Paris where hysteria was much harder to bottle. Indeed, 75 per cent of death sentences to come before the Parlement of Paris were dismissed and 90 per cent of other sentences were commuted in some form or another. Hatred was not easily waylaid, however, and many innocent people found themselves lynched on their return home, while other isolated communities like Ardennes took matters into their own hands with a plethora of lynchings, drownings and stonings that left the courts out of the equation altogether.

Holy Roman Empire

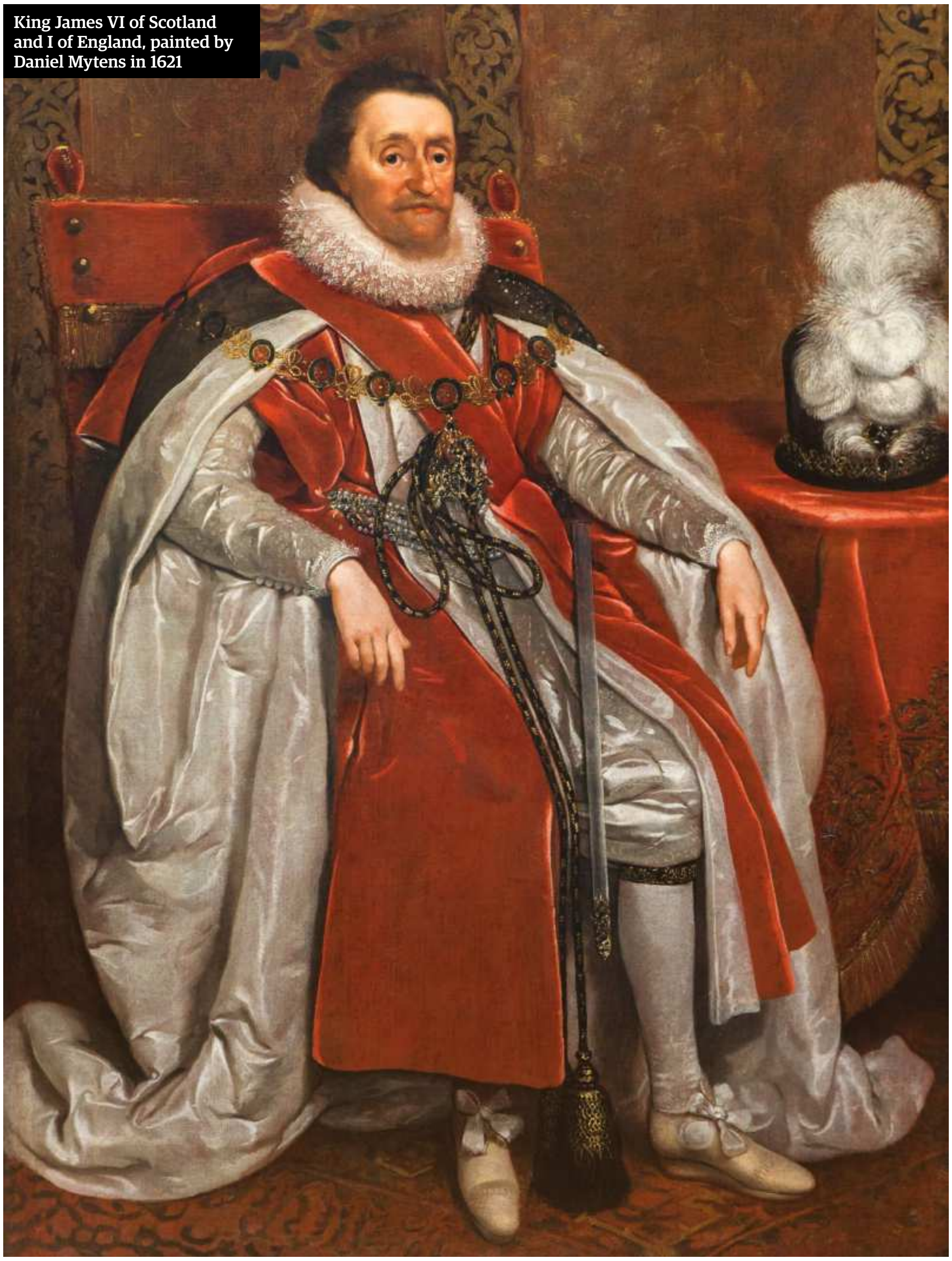
Tried: 50,000 Executed: 25,000-30,000

A patchwork of different states and principalities where the Reformation's faultlines ran like cracks in a windowpane, loopholes existed in an otherwise rational legal code rendering imperial writ powerless in the face of regional momentum. Witch hunting committees of local worthies – capable of levelling a 'witch tax' to fund their endeavours – could apply for processus extraordinarius on the grounds that witchcraft was an extraordinary threat to the Empire. Processus extraordinarius represented a complete and total suspension on due process, giving the committee the power of immediate prosecution, waiver of defence, and recourse to torture. Interestingly, while rural provinces endured witch mania as you'd expect, so too did urban centres, with the the most shocking loss of life occurring in Germany's cities. In Trier, on the border with Luxembourg, 20 per cent of the population were executed between 1581 and 1593.

with the scholars and clergy who enjoyed royal patronage. What he encountered was what we would now consider a strange mixture of superstition and science. The leading Lutheran theologians were totally committed to the concept of spiritual warfare being waged between the forces of good and evil and had a well-developed demonology based on the Bible and the *Malleus Maleficarum*.

Their understanding of witchcraft was not confined to theory. So great was the threat of satanic involvement in human affairs, as they believed, that they were ever on the watch for people who had made a pact with the devil.

Also present at the Danish court were free-thinking philosopher-scientists, foremost among whom was the royal astrologer, Tycho Brahe, who was at the forefront of European study of the movement of heavenly bodies. James, who regarded himself as an academic, was in his element among some of the sophisticated leaders of European thought. He integrated his new insights into his inherited pattern of belief and thought to form a philosophy of his own. Fundamental to his understanding of sovereignty was his conviction that kings were God's anointed representatives. It followed, therefore, that those who opposed the king opposed God and were thus agents of the devil – an idea that applied to treason and also to witchcraft. James now "saw clearly" that the storms that had stopped Anne's voyage to Scotland had been whipped up by those wielding satanic power, a view that was confirmed when his own return home in May 1590 was also hampered by foul

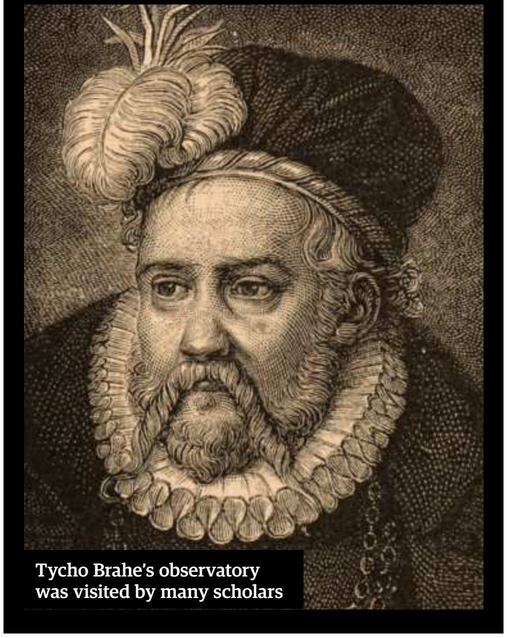


King James VI of Scotland and I of England, painted by Daniel Mytens in 1621

The king's idol

Meet the man who James VI of Scotland saw as his intellectual equal

James could scarcely avoid being impressed by Tycho Brahe (1546-1601). As well as being famous as one of the leading experimental scientists of the age, he was a colourful extrovert who wore a metal sheath over his nose to cover an old fencing scar, threw lavish parties and kept an elk as an indoor pet. Brahe had an elaborate research complex, which included a laboratory, an observatory, a library and a workshop for the manufacture of astronomical instruments. He made thousands of observations and calculations about the movement of heavenly bodies, which he believed important principally for the casting of accurate horoscopes. Though at the cutting edge of scientific research, Brahe was wedded to Lutheran beliefs about demonology. James must have been delighted that the opinions of this intellectual celebrity matched his own in many ways.



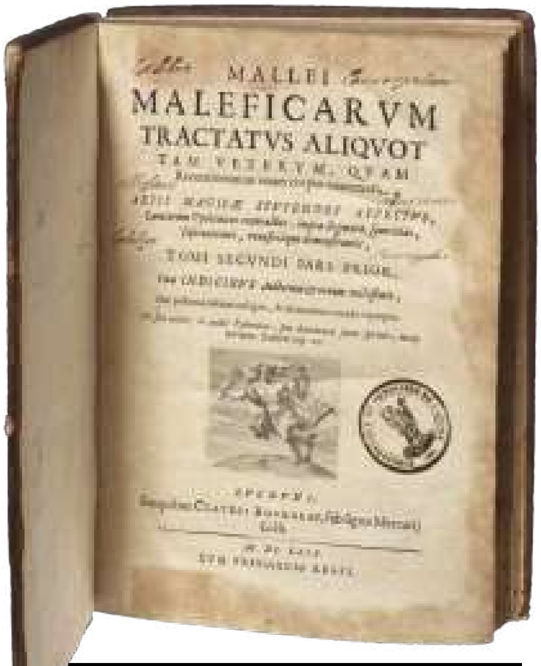
Tycho Brahe's observatory was visited by many scholars

> "A lenient judgement was akin to disloyalty"

weather. Whether he would have taken any action on his own initiative is not clear but, within weeks, news arrived from Denmark that made up his mind for him. The political situation there was similar to the one that had existed a few years earlier in Scotland: squabbling nobles governing the country in the name of an underage king. In the summer of 1590, the chief minister was charged by his rivals with various offences, including endangering the life of Princess Anne by sending her to sea in a poorly equipped ship. He countered by asserting that the near shipwreck had been caused by witches, leading to the arrest of several women and the eventual execution of at least a dozen of them. Under torture, some told their interrogators what they wanted to hear. However, some, if the records are to be believed, needed no pressure to confess to the most bizarre activities and the possession of arcane powers. They enjoyed the celebrity of being thought to have supernatural gifts and claimed to have met with Satan and received authority from him to send devils aboard the royal ships to steer them to near-disaster.

James needed no further incentive to set in motion his own witch hunt on his side of the water - this was the point at which Scottish politics and superstition came together. In his desire to discover the likely outcome of his schemes, Bothwell had resorted to witches who claimed clairvoyant gifts. When this became known to his opponents, the practitioners were arrested and, under examination, they accused the Earl of bribing them to use their powers to kill the king by raising storms to overwhelm the royal fleet returning from Denmark. Treason and maleficium thus merged to present James with a terrifying combination of natural and supernatural forces. Troops loyal to the king pursued Bothwell - now in open rebellion - but, despite many encounters, the earl escaped to the continent in 1595 and spent the rest of his life in exile.

Meanwhile, the more sensational aspect of the affair became the trial of a coven of witches at North Berwick. James attended some of the investigations and heard the main suspects describe their meetings with the prince of darkness. Satan, they averred, had held court in the Auld Kirk at North Berwick, sitting



MALLEI
MALEFICARVM
TRACTATVS ALIQVOT
TAM VETERVM, QVAM

TOMI SECVNDI PARS PRIOR.

A 17th-century copy of Malleus Maleficarum, the tome that detailed the identification and investigation of witches

in the pulpit, clad in a black gown and wearing a tall black hat. His beak-like nose and glowing eyes gave him a frightening aspect and 200 of his devotees had arrived, some flying through the air, eager to do his bidding. According to the records, James was initially sceptical about all this but was convinced when, according to a contemporary report, one of the prime suspects, Agnes Sampson, told him:

> *... the very words which passed between the King's Majesty and his Queen at Upslo in Norway the first night of marriage, with the answers each to other, whereat the King's Majesty wondered greatly, and swore by the living God, that he believed all the devils in hell could not have discovered the same, acknowledging her words to be more true, and therefore gave the more credit to the rest ...*

James may also have been swayed by the flattering testimony, which, according to the accused, came from Satan's own mouth. When asked why his efforts to harm the king had so far proved ineffective, the archfiend replied: "He is a man of God. He does no wrong wittingly, but is inclined to all godliness, justice and virtue." This played directly to James's belief in the holy nature of his calling – there could be no greater proof of this than the testimony of God's principal adversary.

One aspect of the unspeakable tortures to which the original suspects were subjected was this 'revealing' of other offenders against the 1563 Act. Detainees turned informer in the hope of appeasing their interrogators, so that accusations and arrests rippled outward from the centre until more than 100 suspects had been rounded up. For all the fear engendered by these cases, it is interesting to note that juries were not always quick to deliver guilty verdicts. Equally interesting is the king's angry reaction when a witch was acquitted. Since treason and witchcraft were inextricably bound in his thinking, a lenient judgement was akin to disloyalty. He pointed out to the "misguided" jurors how close to death he had been brought by demonic agency and declared that he would continue to oppose the devil and all his works:

> *... for the good of this country, which enjoyeth peace by my life ... as I have thus begun, so propose I to go forward; not because I am James Stuart and can command so many thousands of men, but because God hath made me a king and judge to judge righteous judgement ...*

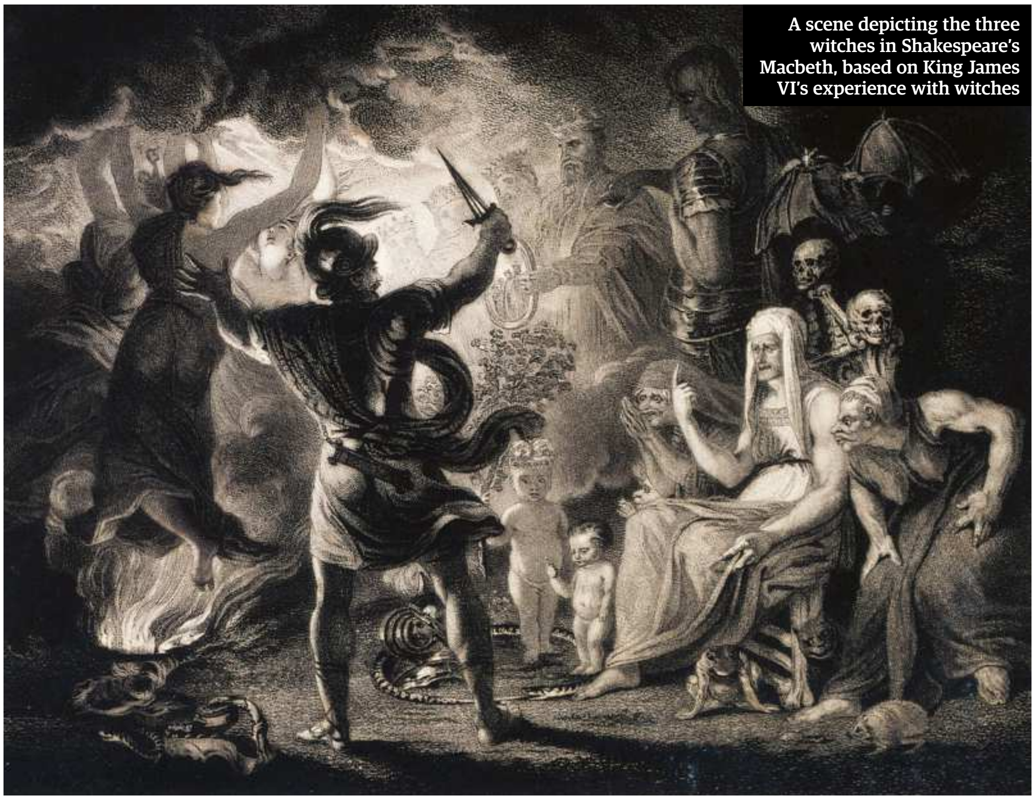
True to his word, James gave his subjects the benefit of his further wisdom on witchcraft in a slender volume entitled *Daemonologie* in 1597. To the modern reader this book may seem idiosyncratic, but it very much caught the mood of the times. Only a decade earlier, an anonymous German author had regaled his readers with a cautionary tale, *Historia Von D. Johann Fausten*, about a scholar who made a pact with the devil and, at about the same time that *Daemonologie* appeared, Christopher Marlowe rendered the *Historia* into a play: *The Tragical History Of The Life And Death Of Doctor Faustus*. However, not everyone was caught up in the witch craze. James' principal target was Reginald Scot, a down-to-earth Kentish gentleman who, in 1584, had sought to explode the whole concept of magic in his book *The Discoverie Of Witchcraft*.

Using the device of a dialogue, the king draws upon the Bible and folklore in his exploration of the heavenly warfare of spiritual forces. But his main interest continues to be in witches, how they can be recognised and how they must be exterminated, and he has a warning for magistrates:

> *... to spare the life and not to strike when God bids strike and so severely punish ... so odious a fault and treason against God ... is not only unlawful but doubtless no less sin in that magistrate ...*

On the death of Elizabeth I in 1603, the English crown was offered to James, who became monarch of both kingdoms. Thereafter, many more exciting and interesting opportunities were opened to him and he gradually abandoned his mission against witches. In 1606, Shakespeare's *Macbeth* was performed at Hampton Court as a celebration of the king's Scottish ancestry, but also a nod towards his campaign against satanic activity. It is inconceivable that when three witches were introduced near the beginning of the play, James would not have recognised certain allusions in the dialogue. The crones discuss how they will attack the captain of a ship bound for Aleppo:

> *Second Witch: I'll give thee a wind*
> *Third Witch: And I another*
> *First Witch: I myself have all the other.*
> *And the very ports [from which] they blow ...*
> *I'll drain him dry as hay.*
> *Sleep shall neither night nor day*
> *Hang upon his penthouse lid ...*
> *Weary seven nights nine times nine*
> *Shall he dwindle, peak and pine.*
> *Though his bark cannot be lost,*
> *Yet it shall be tempest-tossed ...*



A scene depicting the three witches in Shakespeare's Macbeth, based on King James VI's experience with witches

©Alamy

Guy Fawkes was implicated in the Gunpowder Plot

The Gunpowder Plot

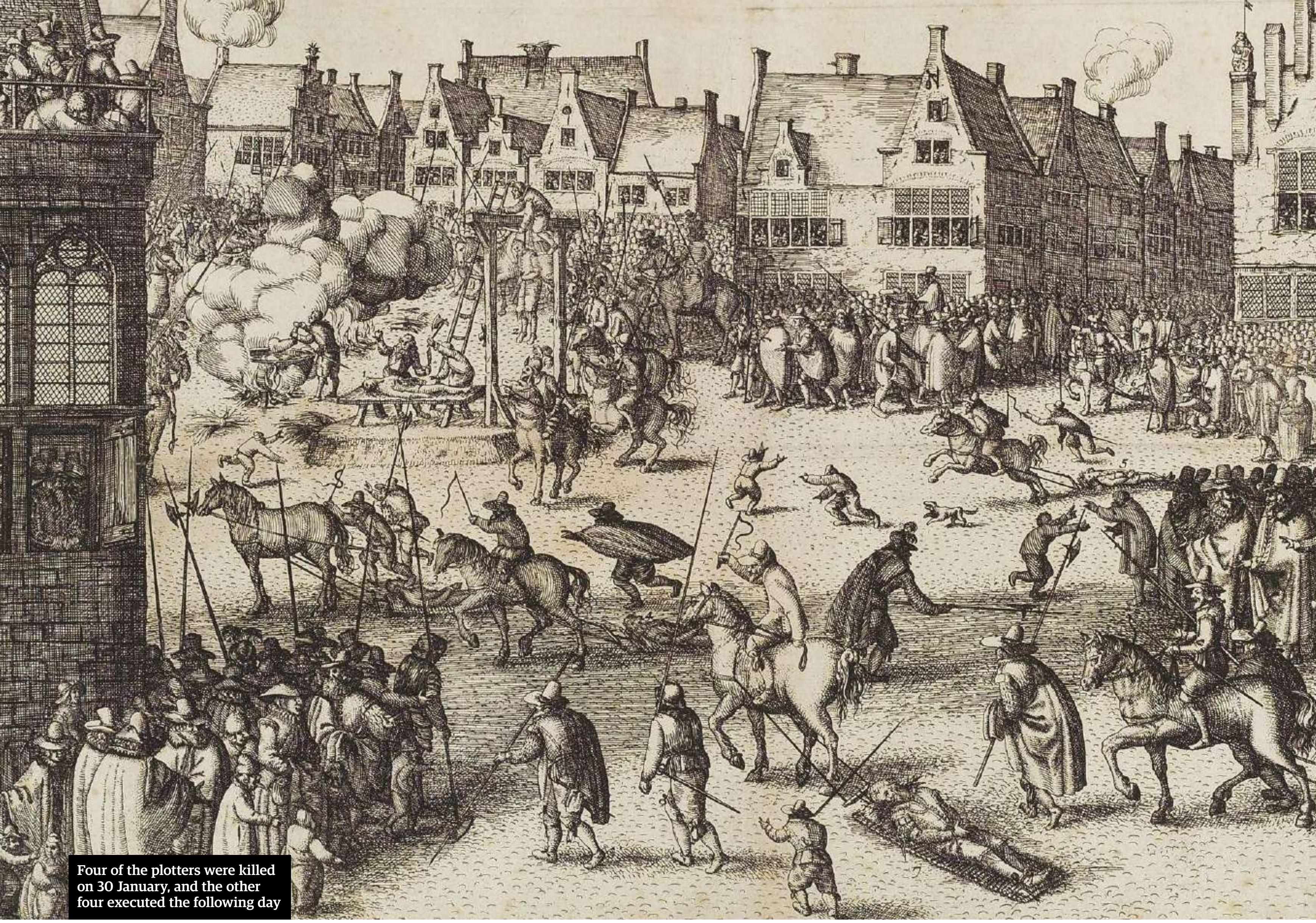
Everyone remembers the fifth of November, but the true story of the men who plotted the gunpowder treason often remains forgotten

When Queen Elizabeth I drew her last breath on her mammoth 44-year-long reign, Catholics around England let out their own sighs of relief. Life under Elizabeth had not been easy. Perhaps in retaliation to the brutal rule of her sister Mary, the devout Catholic queen, Elizabeth had introduced a range of legislations that hit Catholics hard. She was likely fearful of Catholics, and she had reason to be, as a Papal Bull declared that a Catholic's allegiance was not to the Crown, but to God. In one swift move, every Catholic in England was branded a traitor. Simply being a Catholic, or even sheltering Catholics, was not only illegal but akin to high treason. Terrified, but devoted to their faith, Catholics were forced underground and some 130 priests were executed. As the queen aged, many of the people who had suffered most under her reign began to hope for a successor who would be more sympathetic to their plight.

Considering how much was at stake, the crown passed to its next bearer incredibly smoothly. James I was the great-great-grandson of Henry VII, and although he was a Protestant, his mother had been a devout Catholic. For the struggling Catholics, King James' early acts to relax the fines that they suffered were very encouraging. However, this joy quickly turned sour. Realising how the fines filled up the treasury, James reinstalled them and openly damned the Catholic faith. The hopes of many Catholics were crushed, and for some, this was the final straw.

If one man had felt the bitter sting of anti-Catholicism in England, it was Robert Catesby. A man from an illustrious family line that stretched back to William Catesby, trusted adviser of Richard III, his entire life he had watched his family's wealth be chipped away by harsh fines. When Catesby was only eight years old, he witnessed his father arrested and tried for harbouring a priest. For the remainder of his young years, his father was constantly in and out of prison. Catesby was tall, handsome and gifted, but he had been forced to drop out of his studies, as obtaining his degree required him to take the oath of supremacy, which swore allegiance to the queen and the Church of England. The Protestant monarchy had taken everything in Catesby's life: his childhood, his father, his fortune and his future.

Catesby possessed not only good looks, but also a generous and affable nature, and as a result, he had amassed a large and powerful circle of friends. His allegiance to the Catholic faith was no secret, and he had taken part in a previous rebellion.



Four of the plotters were killed on 30 January, and the other four executed the following day

Catholic Crime & Punishment

Life for Catholics was anything but easy under the Protestant monarchs

Crime	Punishment
Not attending Anglican service	Initially fined 12 shillings, then raised to £20 per month
Attending a private Catholic mass	Imprisonment
Not paying fines	Imprisonment
Fleeing abroad for longer than six months without permission	Forfeit the profits of lands and all goods
Being a Catholic priest	Death
Refusing to accept the monarch as head of the Church	Imprisonment and death
Reconciling any person to the Catholic church	Death

When Queen Elizabeth fell ill in 1596, Catesby was arrested simply because the government feared that he would take advantage of the situation and organise an uprising. Catesby's experiences typified the lives of all Catholics of the time; he was the beating heart of the Catholic struggle, and he was rich and influential enough to actually do something about it.

Catesby had a plan. Killing the king was not enough; Elizabeth's demise had proved that the death of a monarch did not ensure change. The status quo was against him, so the status quo needed to change. To do this, he would blast it to smithereens. In February 1604, Catesby invited Thomas Wintour and John Wright to his house. Wintour, Catesby's cousin, had also felt the sting of anti-Catholicism as his own uncle had been executed for being a priest. Wright was an old friend of Catesby's and had taken part in a rebellion against Elizabeth. In his house in Lambeth, Catesby revealed his grand plan – he would re-establish Catholicism by blowing up the House of Lords during the opening of Parliament. Not only would the king be present, but also the most powerful Protestants in the land. The attack would produce a power vacuum, and the Catholics would be poised and ready to fill it.

Understandably, Wintour was shocked by his cousin's plans. He was quick to argue that, should they fail, it would put back their cause several years. Catesby responded: "The nature of the disease requires so sharp a remedy." He launched into an impassioned speech about the righteousness of his cause, and how Parliament was the perfect target as "in that place they have done us all the mischief." Catesby's natural charisma quickly won around his cousin, who pledged his loyalty and life to the impassioned leader. Catesby had recruited his first co-conspirators, and more were to follow. Seeking support from the Catholic Spain, Wintour travelled to Flanders. Although he struggled to obtain Spanish support, while there he sought out the man who was fated to become the face of the gunpowder plot – Guy Fawkes. Fawkes had made his Catholic allegiance very clear by fighting on the side of Spain during the Eighty Years' War and had been attempting to drum up support in the country. He was tall, well built with a mop of thick red-brown hair, and he was also determined, driven and skilled in all matters of war. However, there was one of Fawkes' talents that attracted Catesby in particular – his proficiency and knowledge of gunpowder.

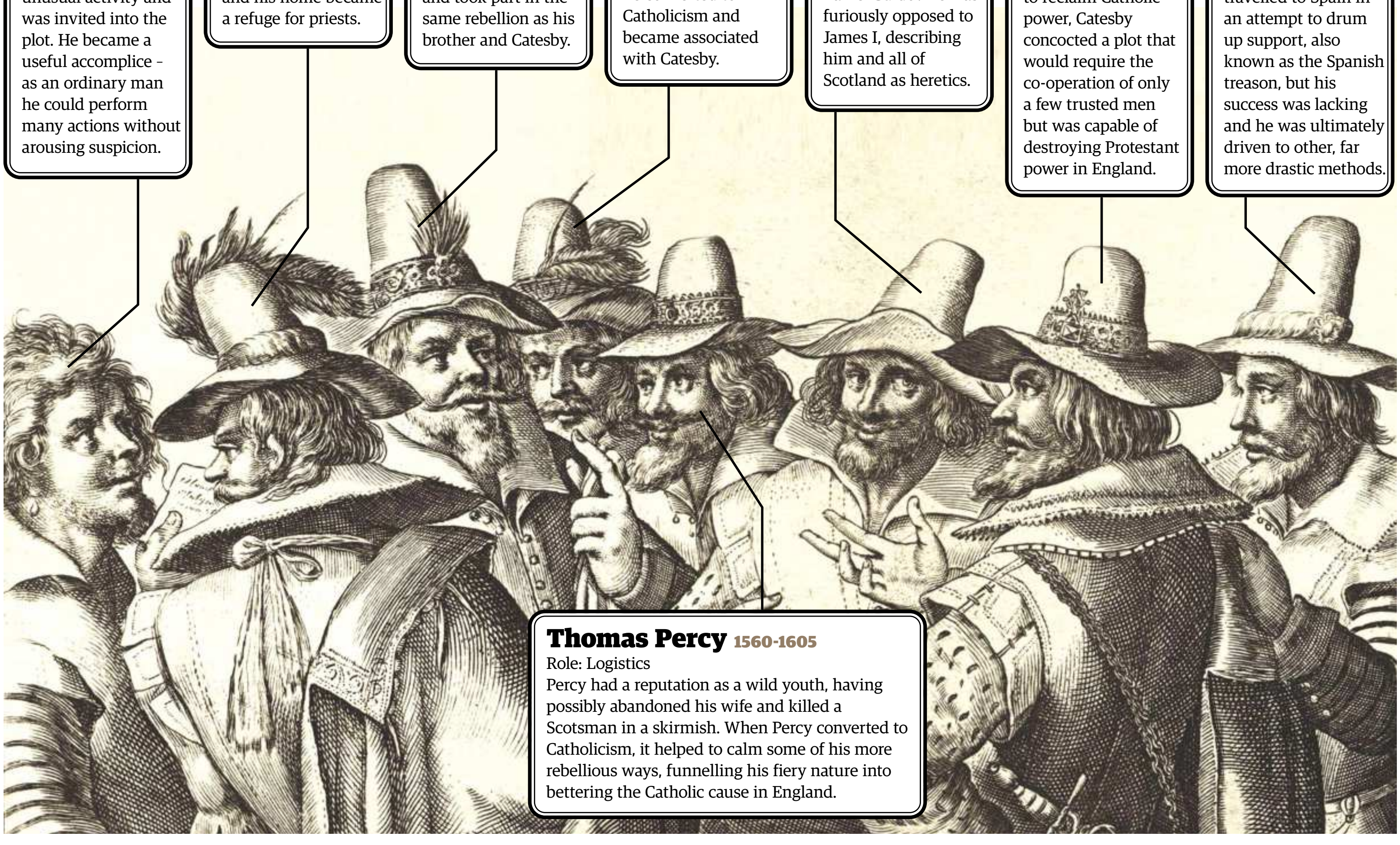
When the men met again at the Duck and Drake Inn, they had drafted another conspirator, Thomas Percy, a dear friend of Catesby's. Percy had a reputation as a wild and rebellious youth. He had attempted to build a strong relationship with

James I for the good of his religion, but now felt the bitter sting of betrayal. Percy, on a previous occasion, had to be stopped by Catesby from storming into the palace and taking down the king single handedly. Together, these five passionate and wronged men met in the Catholic safe house and Catesby outlined the plan. Percy's support was almost a given, and he proclaimed: "Shall we always, gentlemen, talk and never do anything?" Swayed either by their enigmatic leader or their own hatred of Protestants, the five men swore an oath of secrecy upon a bible and received the Holy Communion from a priest secretly celebrating mass, completely unaware that the men were planning regicide.

With his first co-conspirators in place, Catesby sprung into action. The opening of Parliament had been postponed until 5 November the following year due to plague. This gave him plenty of time to prepare everything. Initially, Catesby figured the best way to get the gunpowder beneath the House of Lords would be to dig a tunnel, but the men soon realised a far safer way was to lease one of the storerooms that lay beneath. Luckily, Percy had a business in London, so could easily lease a storeroom without attracting suspicion. Explosives expert Guy Fawkes posed as John Johnson, Percy's servant, and was placed in the premises. The conspirators stored the gunpowder in Catesby's house and gradually ferried it across the Thames into the dwelling under the cover of darkness.

> "The status quo needed to change. To do this, he would blast it to smithereens"

Steadily, more and more men were drafted into the conspiracy, as it proved impossible for five men alone to handle such grand plans. Catesby's servant, Bates, became suspicious, and his master had no option but to recruit him. Robert Keyes, Robert Wintour, John Grant and Christopher Wright were also all inducted. Not only were they all passionate Catholics, but many possessed large fortunes and manor houses that would certainly aid the cause. Secretly, Catesby was worried. He



Thomas Bates
1567-1606
Role: Catesby's servant
Born in Warwickshire, Bates was employed as Catesby's servant and was seen as a hard-working and loyal man. Due to his close proximity to Catesby, he became suspicious of his unusual activity and was invited into the plot. He became a useful accomplice – as an ordinary man he could perform many actions without arousing suspicion.

Robert Wintour
1568-1606
Role: Financial support
The oldest Wintour brother, Robert inherited the majority of his father's estate, including Huddington Court. Through marriage, Robert aligned himself to a strong Catholic family, and his home became a refuge for priests.

Christopher Wright
1570-1605
Role: Conspirator
The younger of the Wright brothers, Christopher was described as taller, fatter and fairer than John. A private and discreet man, since his conversion he was fully committed to the Catholic faith, and took part in the same rebellion as his brother and Catesby.

John Wright
1568-1605
Role: Original conspirator
The older of the two Wright brothers, John was a school friend of Guy Fawkes and was thrown in prison for taking part in rebellions. With a reputation as a brave, loyal and skilled swordsman, he converted to Catholicism and became associated with Catesby.

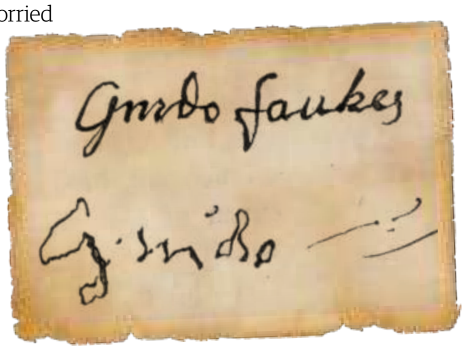
Guy Fawkes
1570-1606
Role: Explosives expert
Born in York, Fawkes lost his father at a young age, and when his mother married a Catholic, he converted to the faith. He fought for Spain in the Eighty Years' War, and adopted the Italian form of his name 'Guido'. He was furiously opposed to James I, describing him and all of Scotland as heretics.

Robert Catesby
1573-1605
Role: Leader
The only surviving son of Sir William Catesby, Robert Catesby gained a reputation as a Catholic sympathiser after taking part in a rebellion in hopes of usurping the queen. Desperate to reclaim Catholic power, Catesby concocted a plot that would require the co-operation of only a few trusted men but was capable of destroying Protestant power in England.

Thomas Wintour
1571-1606
Role: Original co-conspirator
Thomas Wintour was intelligent, witty and well educated. He fought against Catholic Spain, but his views quickly changed and he became a faithful Catholic. Thomas travelled to Spain in an attempt to drum up support, also known as the Spanish treason, but his success was lacking and he was ultimately driven to other, far more drastic methods.

Thomas Percy **1560-1605**
Role: Logistics
Percy had a reputation as a wild youth, having possibly abandoned his wife and killed a Scotsman in a skirmish. When Percy converted to Catholicism, it helped to calm some of his more rebellious ways, funnelling his fiery nature into bettering the Catholic cause in England.

wasn't a terrorist motivated by blind revenge, he was a moral and religious man, and he wanted to be sure that what he was doing was right. Struggling with his conscience, he repeatedly visited two priests, Father Henry Garnet and Oswald Tesimond. Catesby had no doubts that the king was guilty, but he worried about the innocent people who would inevitably be killed in the blast. He asked if this could be excused: was it okay to kill innocents for the greater good? Sworn to the law of confession, Garnet could tell no one of Catesby's plot, but he attempted to dissuade him.

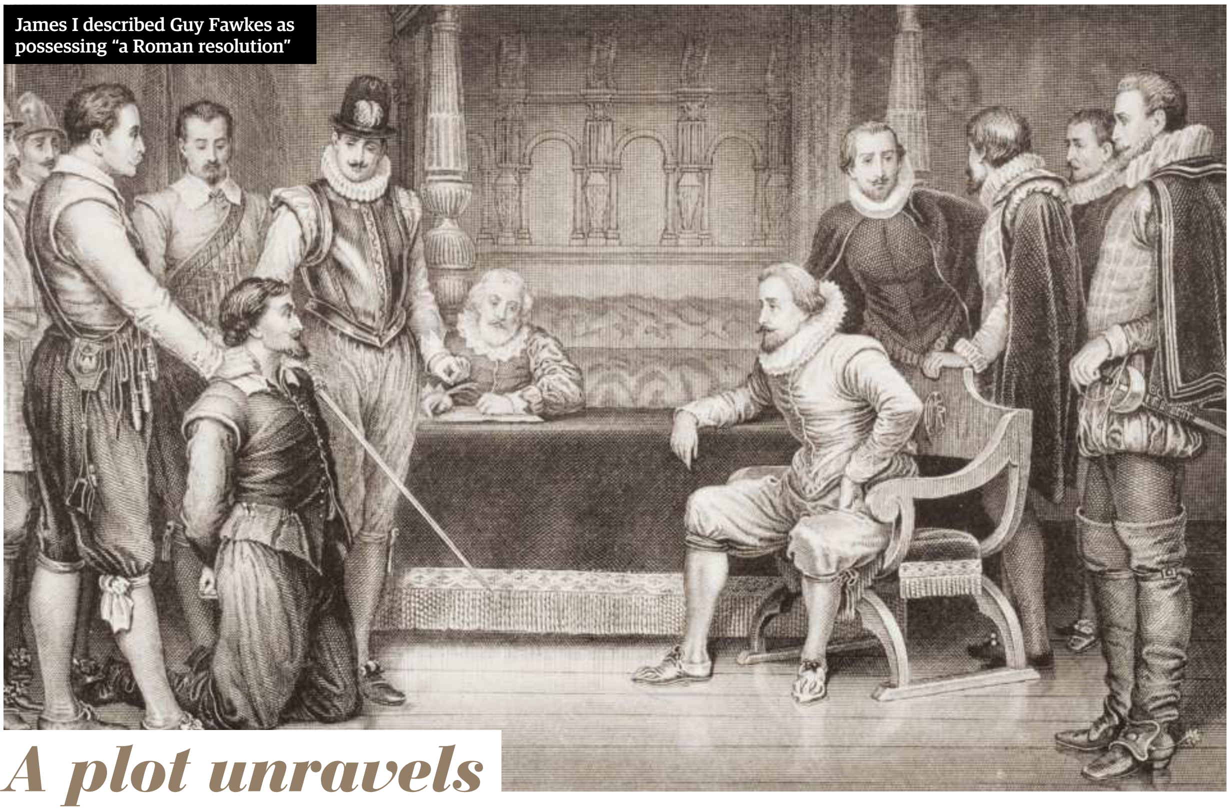

Guido fawkes
Guido

Guy Fawkes' signature before torture (top) and after (bottom)

Despite the priests' warnings, Catesby continued bringing gunpowder into the storage hold. He also began to make plans for the second part of their scheme. Eager to maintain some order after the king's death, he decided that James' child, Princess Elizabeth, would be put in place as his successor. At only eight years old he believed that she could be moulded into the figurehead they desired. Elizabeth was also located not in London but in Coombe Abbey near Coventry. In order to make sure this final stage went off without a hitch, Catesby recruited his final three conspirators, Ambrose Rookwood, Everard Digby and Francis Tresham.

By October, everything was in place. Fawkes would remain in London and light the fuse, before escaping the city and travelling to Europe to drum up support. Meanwhile, in the subsequent madness, a revolt would break out in the Midlands and Elizabeth would be captured. Catesby seemed to have recovered from his earlier concern, but the same could not be said of his co-conspirators. A number of the men had friends in Parliament who were fellow Catholics. Late in the evening on 26 October, a letter arrived at the house of one of these fellow Catholics: Lord Monteagle, a man who had, in his youth, played a part in a fair number of Catholic plots himself. The contents of the letter were shocking. It warned him to abstain from attending Parliament on 5 November, as "they shall receive a terrible blow, this Parliament." Very aware of how serious this threat could be, Monteagle alerted the Earl of Salisbury.

News of the letter quickly found its way back to Catesby, and Tresham was immediately suspected, as Monteagle was his brother-in-law. Catesby and Thomas Wintour furiously confronted the new recruit, threatening to hang him for his idiocy, but Tresham was able to convince his fiery leader of his innocence. However, Catesby was unwilling to listen to Tresham's urges to abandon the plot – he was too committed. Risks be damned, the plot would go ahead as planned.



James I described Guy Fawkes as possessing "a Roman resolution"

A plot unravels

As the plot was uncovered, the men fled their separate ways, clinging to hope of revolution

4 November

Evening
Westminster
Catesby, John Wright and Bates decide that the plot will go ahead, despite the discovery that a warning letter was sent to Monteagle, and begin setting out towards the Midlands.

Night
Parliament vaults
The king's men search the vaults under Parliament. They stumble upon Fawkes standing by a pile of wood, who calmly informs them his name is John Johnson, and that he works for Thomas Percy.

Late night
Parliament vaults
Under the king's orders, the men return to the vault and find Fawkes dressed ready for a getaway. He is immediately arrested and taken before the king in the early hours of 5 November.

5 November

Morning
Westminster
Christopher Wright learns of the plot's discovery and rushes to the Duck and Drake Inn to inform Thomas Wintour. Wintour warns those still in London – Percy, Keyes and Rookwood.

Midday
Near Milton Keynes
Rookwood rides furiously for two hours and manages to catch up with Catesby and the others to warn them of the plot's failure and Fawkes' arrest. They decide to continue on to Dunchurch.

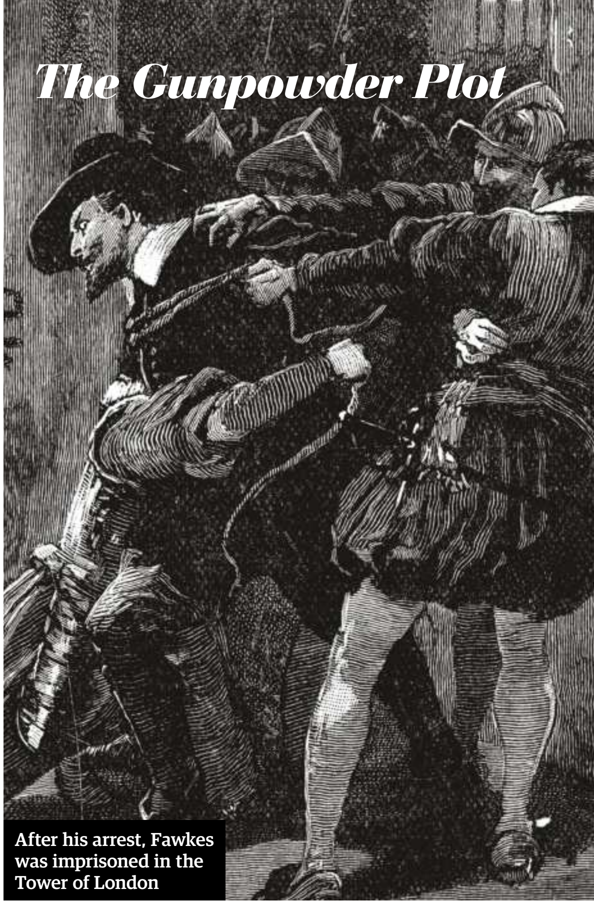
6pm
Ashby St Ledgers
The six fleeing conspirators meet up with Robert Wintour, then continue on and meet with Digby, who is accompanied by a hunting party. They continue west to Warwick.

Meanwhile, the king had learned of the mysterious letter. Unlike many of his advisers, he took the warning very seriously. However, he decided to bide his time until the night in question, and see if the conspirators would carry out their alleged plot. When 4 November dawned, both the king and Catesby leapt into action. Catesby, with John Wright and Bates, left for the Midlands to launch the second part of the plan, while Fawkes prepared for his pivotal part.

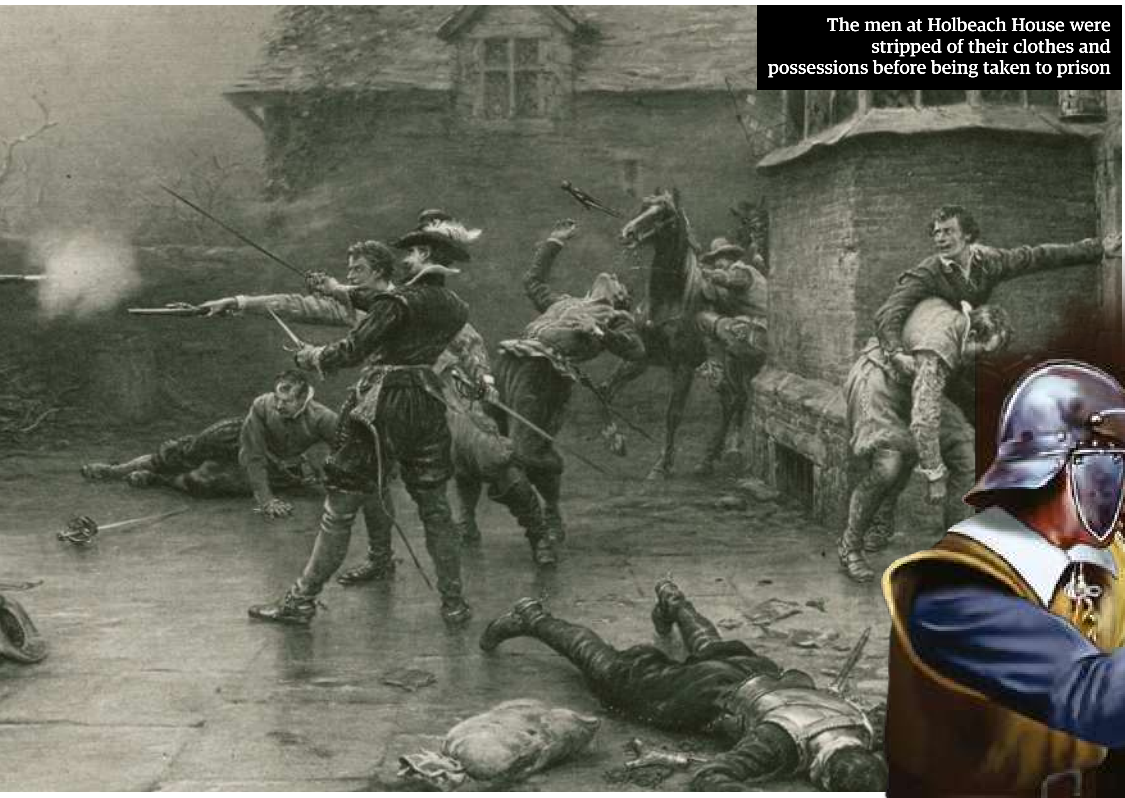
The king was preparing too. James' men were searching all the buildings around Parliament for signs of anything suspicious. It was in the cellar during one of these searches that they stumbled upon Fawkes. Dressed as a serving man, he stood before a large, suspicious pile of firewood. He explained that he was a servant of Percy, though came across rather desperate. Apprehensive but not willing to upset him further, the men left to report their findings to the king. As soon as James heard Percy's name, his suspicions were aroused, and he ordered another search of the cellar to confirm the servant's presence.

When the men returned, Fawkes was still there. Dressed in his hat, cape and spurs, ready for a quick getaway, he was arrested and searched. Although he stuck to his story and insisted his name was John Johnson, they discovered matches and touchwood on his person. The king's men inspected the firewood and uncovered 36 barrels of gunpowder, enough to blow the houses of Parliament sky high.

Everything now rested with Fawkes. The plot had failed, that much was obvious, but if he held out long enough, the lives of his friends could be saved. As Fawkes was questioned, he displayed remarkable courage in the face of almost certain death. He stuck by his story that he was indeed John Johnson. However, he did not for a moment deny his intentions, proclaiming that it was his plan to destroy the king and Parliament. When asked for the names of his accomplices, he was insistent he acted alone. James was impressed by Fawkes' resilience, but he needed names, and if torture would loosen his tongue, so be it. News of Fawkes' arrest quickly spread to the other

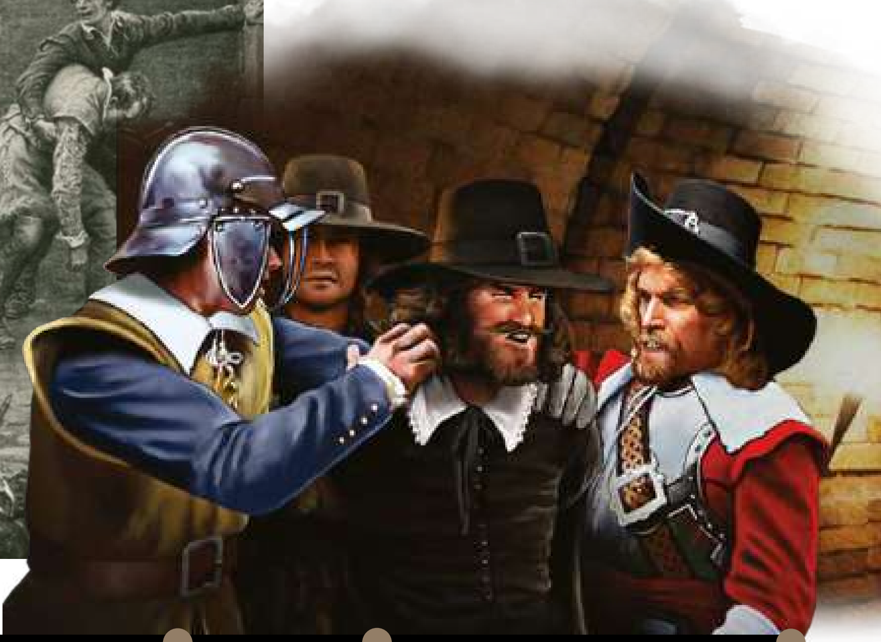


After his arrest, Fawkes was imprisoned in the Tower of London



The men at Holbeach House were stripped of their clothes and possessions before being taken to prison

"Killing the king was a step too far; even his fellow Catholics had deserted him"



6 November

Morning
Warwick Castle
Catesby and his men raid the castle for supplies, arming themselves for the fight they believe will follow, before continuing to Norbrook where they pick up more weapons.

Afternoon
Huddington
The conspirators arrive in Huddington and meet with Thomas Wintour. Despite Catesby's hopes, nobody is willing to ally with them, and they are forced to continue alone.

Evening
London
The Lord Chief Justice questions Rookwood's servants and uncovers the identity of several of the men involved in the plot, including Catesby, Rookwood and Wintour.

Evening
Tower of London
With Guy Fawkes' resolve still holding, James permits the use of torture to loosen his tongue. He orders that 'gentler tortures' are used first.

7 November

Night
Tower of London
After enduring the horrors of the rack, Guy Fawkes finally confesses the details of the plot as well as the names of his fellow co-conspirators.

Night
Holbeach House
The fugitives arrive at Holbeach House. They spread out their damp gunpowder before a fire and many of them are set alight. Some of the men choose to leave.

8 November

Morning
Holbeach House
200 men led by the Sheriff of Worcestershire besiege Holbeach House. In the gunfight that erupts Catesby, Percy and the Wrights are killed. The others are arrested.

conspirators. The men who remained in London fled. Percy, aware that his name would be linked to the crime, proclaimed: "I am undone!" Rookwood, an exceptional rider, furiously rode in Catesby's direction to warn him. His incredible ride saw him travel 30 miles in just two hours. He arrived breathlessly at Catesby's side and informed him of the plot's uncovering.

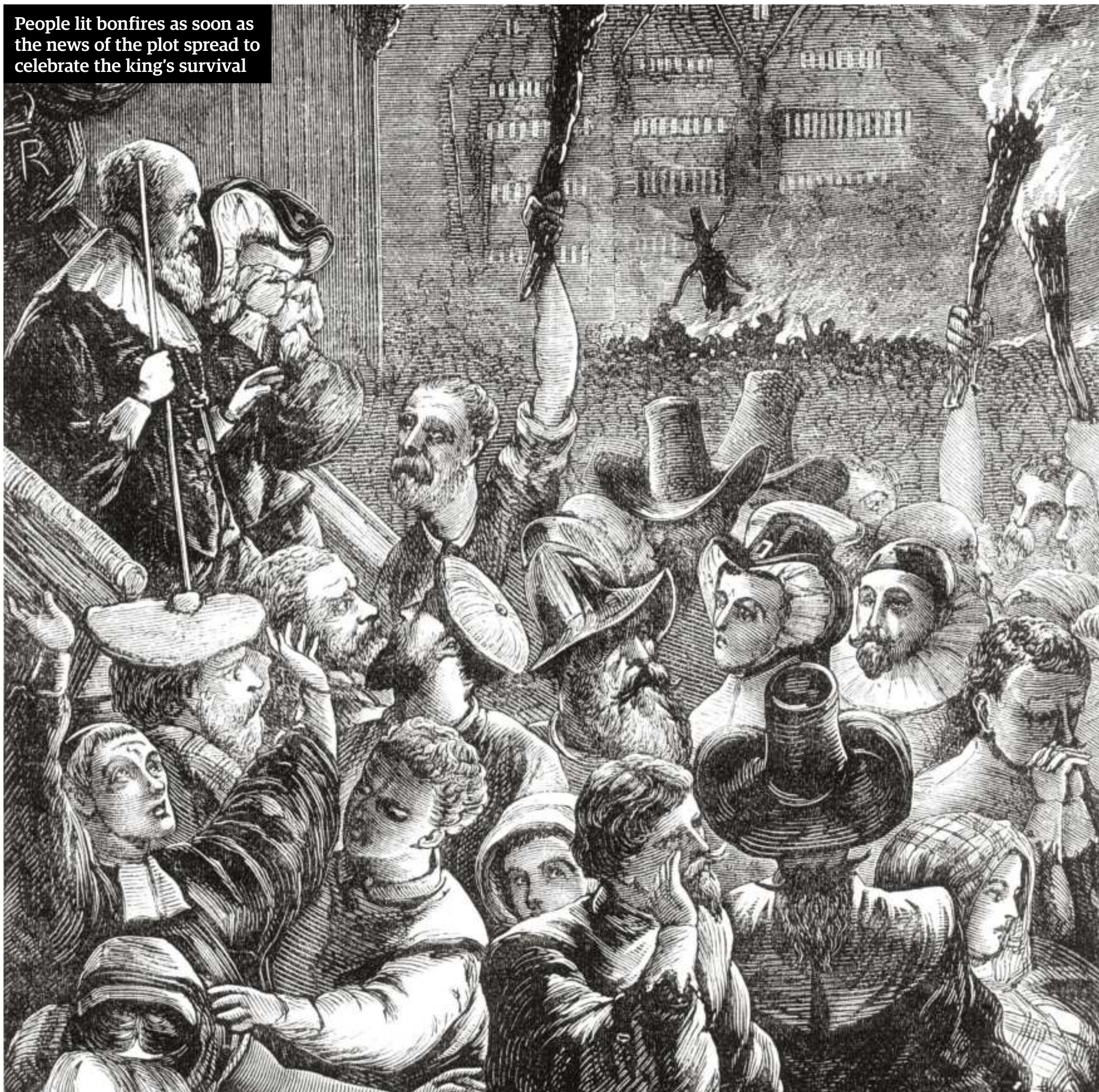
Catesby was crushed. He had poured everything into this revolution and was desperate to cling onto any hope he could find. He proclaimed that he could still gather enough support for an armed uprising. He knew enough resentful Catholics for an insurrection, and one way or another he would have his rebellion. The plotters could have left. There was enough time for them to flee England with their lives, but their commitment to their passionate leader and their belief in the cause was so great that they remained by his side.

The men continued on to the Midlands, but the support Catesby had promised did not come. Word of the treasonous plot had spread rapidly through the country, faster than the men could travel, and even their friends and families turned them away. Catesby had fatally misjudged the situation. Killing the king was a step too far; even his fellow Catholics had deserted him. Wet, miserable and dejected, when the men finally reached their safe house of Holbeach House in Staffordshire, they spread out their gunpowder in front of a fire to dry it off. A spark ignited it, and engulfed Catesby, Rookwood and Grant in flames.

Meanwhile, in London, the king's men were steadily breaking Fawkes' steely resolve. He was placed upside down in manacles and hung from a wall, and most likely strapped to the rack, his limbs agonisingly dislocated. By 7 November, what remained of Fawkes' resolve had crumbled. Broken and drained, he confessed the details of the plot and the names of all his co-conspirators.

Catesby was alive, but for some the explosion was a grim sign and their commitment to their leader finally waned. Gradually, the team began to unravel. Digby headed for the authorities; Bates, Littleton and Robert Wintour also made their escape. Eventually, all who remained were Catesby, Percy, Thomas Wintour, the Wright brothers, a wounded Rookwood, and Grant, who had been blinded by the fire. Miserable and broken, when the 200 armed government men descended on the group on 8 November, the fugitives had no hope.

The fight was brief: Wintour was shot first followed by the Wright brothers and Rookwood. Catesby and Percy managed to summon the last embers of their fiery zeal and made a final stand together at the door. When they fell, it was as one, by a single bullet. On the edge of death and bleeding out, Catesby used his final ounce of strength to drag himself to a photo of the Virgin Mary, and cradling it in his arms, breathed his last.



People lit bonfires as soon as the news of the plot spread to celebrate the king's survival

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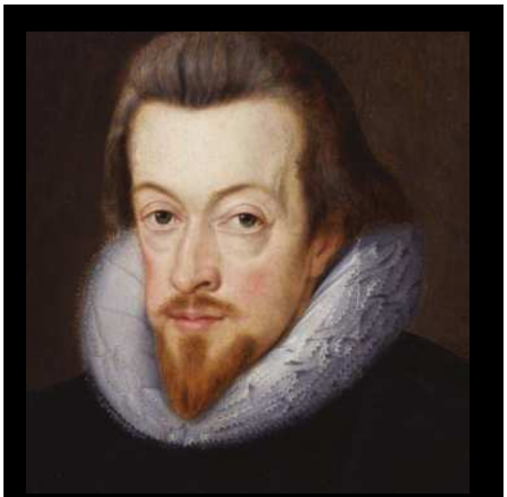


The Gunpowder conspiracy

Was the plot really a state conspiracy?

The mystery

Much of the suspicion surrounding the plot has involved, in some part, the role of the Earl of Salisbury. It was Salisbury who Monteagle alerted upon receiving the letter, and his peculiar actions have prompted many to ponder if he had more knowledge of the plot than he let on. First of all, he failed to immediately inform the king of the plot, who was out hunting and did not return for several days. Salisbury's involvement in the plot actually began before the letter even arrived, as he was aware that something was being planned. When the king did learn of the letter, Salisbury denied this knowledge completely, and allowed the king to take full credit. This may have been a clever political play, but perhaps it hints at more.

The motive

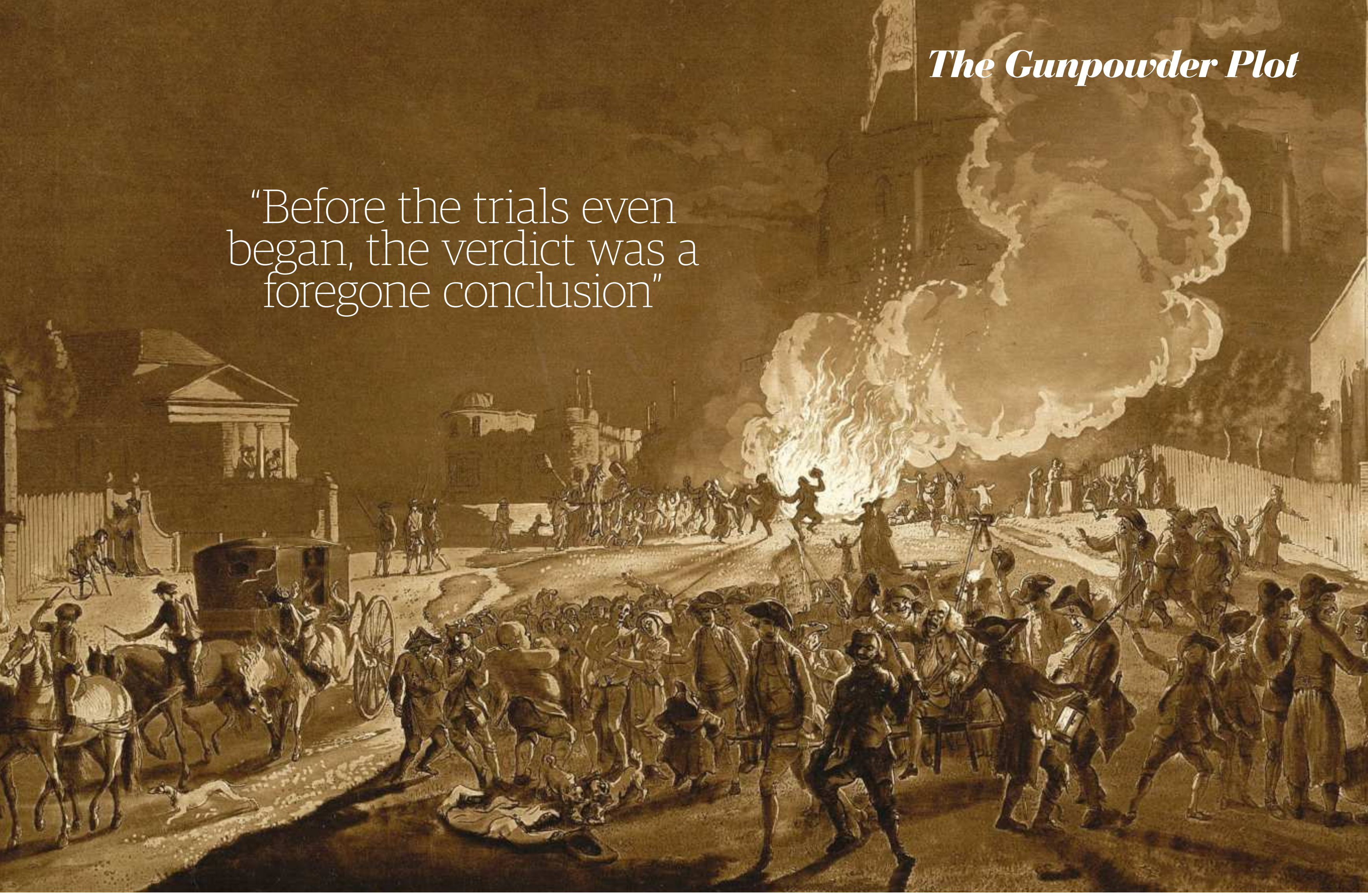
The foiling of the plot benefited the king immensely. The feeling of goodwill towards the monarch encouraged Parliament to grant astonishingly high subsidies for the king, and the thanks for this lay at Salisbury's feat. An ambitious man, Salisbury expertly exploited the situation to garner favour with the monarch, and also allowed him to introduce more anti-Catholic legislation. Salisbury's anti-Catholic feelings far outstripped the monarch's, and he wished to rid England of the religion once and for all.

His involvement

Conspiracy theorists summarise that Salisbury may have invented the entire plot himself, targeting known Catholic agitators and penning the letter to Monteagle. Others argue that instead of inventing it, Salisbury infiltrated the plot far earlier than the letter reveal, and simply allowed it to continue, knowing that he could use it later to fuel the fire of anti-Catholicism.

Evidence

The ease in which the conspirators conducted the plot is the main evidence here. The fact that they were able to get 36 barrels of gunpowder in a country where gunpowder was strictly controlled by the government and store them under the Houses of Parliament would have been very difficult. However, the lack of any other evidence makes this conspiracy impossible to prove. If Salisbury invented the plot, it is unlikely all the men would have confessed to the crime, knowing that death would be the result. The more likely conclusion is that Salisbury was a quick-thinking opportunist, who, upon uncovering the truth, exploited the situation for all that it was worth.



“Before the trials even began, the verdict was a foregone conclusion”

The men who died at the house – Catesby, Percy and the Wright brothers – were lucky. Those who remained were rounded up, arrested and thrown in prison. Under threat of torture, all of the men admitted their involvement in the plot. Before the trials even began, the verdict was a foregone conclusion. The men were paraded up and jeered at by a furious audience. The conspirators had no defence, so could only utter their own pleas for mercy. Rookwood in particular spoke for all the men when he said he was “neither actor nor author,” and had acted out of blind devotion to their ringleader – Catesby, “whom he loved above any worldly man.”

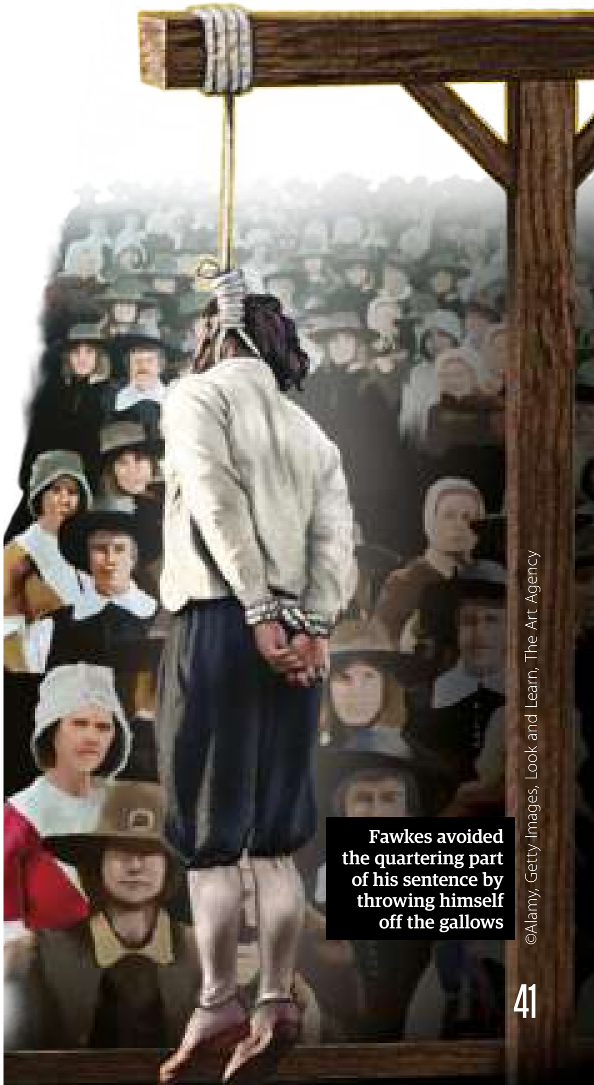
Fawkes' legacy

The link between the Gunpowder Plot and bonfires was created almost immediately. While Fawkes was still subject to interrogations on 5 November, people around London lit bonfires in celebration of their monarch's escape. These fiery pyres spread all across the country as the news travelled, and instantly became part of the tradition. The king introduced an Act declaring that all his people had to attend a thanksgiving service to celebrate his survival. This annual service continued until 1859, cementing the Gunpowder Plot in the nation's memory. Even in 1647, when all feast days were abolished, the 5 November celebration remained. Bonfire night took on a new form in the 18th century, with people burning effigies of the pope and treating it as a general anti-Catholic event. As Fawkes' association with the plot grew, people began to burn effigies of Fawkes instead, a tradition that continues to this day. The religious overtones have been all but extinguished.

The people didn't care how charismatic their leader was. They wanted blood, and they were going to get it. The men were declared guilty of treason, and on a chilly 30 January, the first four faced their punishment. They were dragged through the street strapped to a wooden panel on the back of a horse. Then, the men were stripped down to their shirts and their heads placed in a noose. They were briefly hung, but cut down while still breathing so they could experience the pain of having their genitals cut off and burned before their eyes. The bowels and the heart were then removed, and the bodies cut into pieces and displayed for the birds to pick at. The bodies of Catesby and Percy were also decapitated, and their heads exhibited as a grim warning. Only one man, the final to face punishment, managed to escape the pain of castration and disembowelling – Guy Fawkes, broken and barely able to stand, used his final ounce of strength to leap from the gallows and break his neck, dying instantly.

The plan had been a disastrous failure, and the unearthing of such a dangerous Catholic plot that almost ended in complete tragedy did little to help the lives of Catholics in England. Although James was quick to make it clear that he did not blame all Catholics in his nation, strict laws against them were soon implemented.

True Catholic emancipation would take a further 200 years to appear, and the men who had schemed, fought and died for it would live on only in legend and rhyme.



Fawkes avoided the quartering part of his sentence by throwing himself off the gallows

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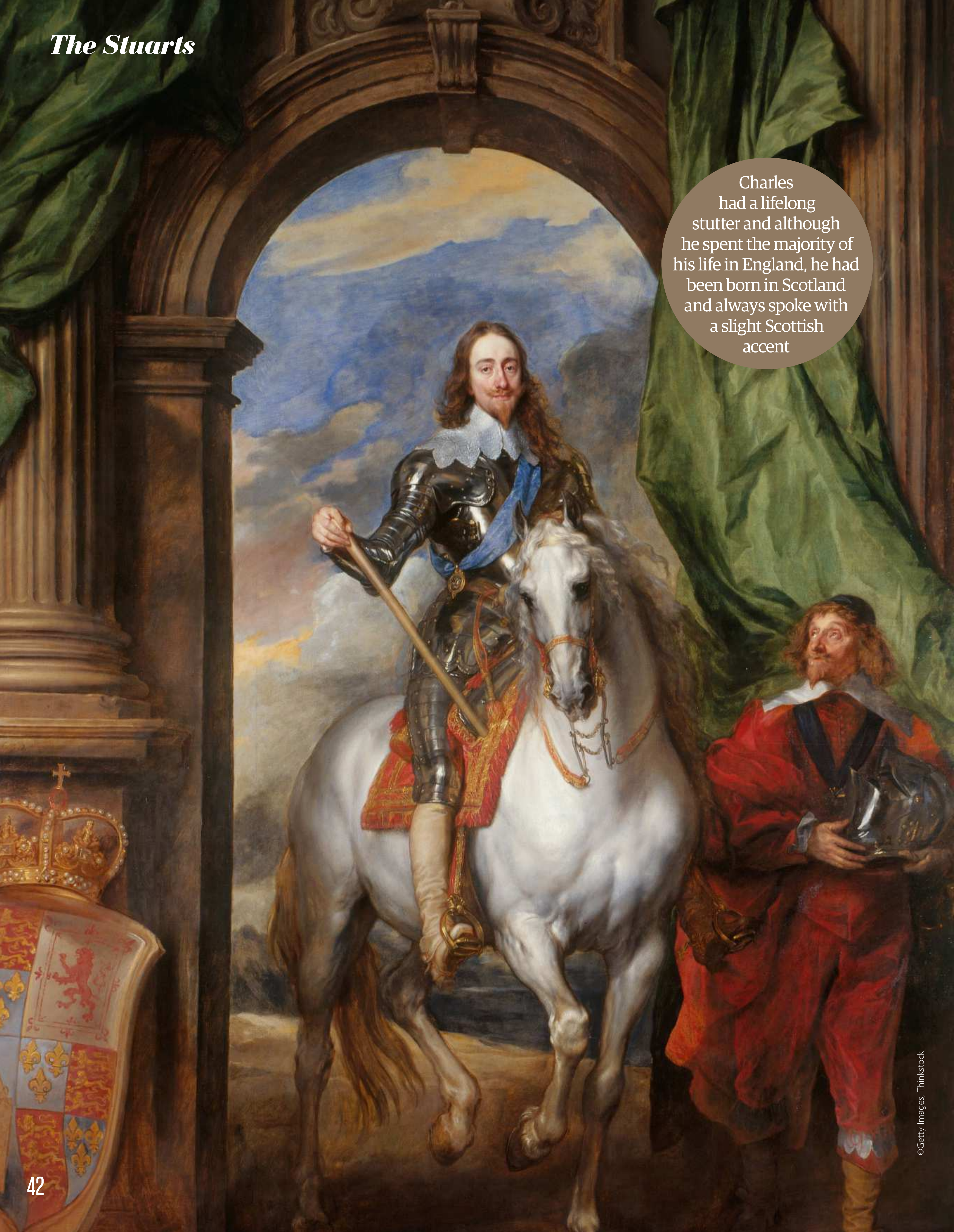

Charles had a lifelong stutter and although he spent the majority of his life in England, he had been born in Scotland and always spoke with a slight Scottish accent

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INTRODUCING

Charles I

This controversial king's famous disputes with England's Parliament led to civil war and his own execution

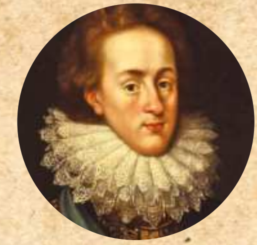
Timeline

1600

A Scottish birth
Charles is born at Dunfermline Palace as the third child of James VI of Scotland and Anne of Denmark. He is created duke of Albany at his baptism but his older brother, Henry, is the heir to the Scottish throne.
19 November 1600

The Stuarts inherit England
James VI becomes James I of England upon the death of Elizabeth I, the last Tudor. Britain is now united under a single crown and Charles moves to England with his family. In 1605, Charles is created duke of York.
1603-05

Death of Prince Henry Frederick
Charles' older brother, successor to the thrones of Scotland and England, dies of typhoid aged just 18 leaving Charles as the new heir. Many had regarded Henry Frederick as a future champion of Protestantism and were looking forward to his rule.
6 November 1612

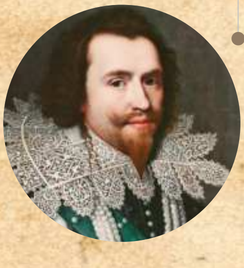


The Spanish match
Charles and the duke of Buckingham, James' favourite, travel incognito to Spain to try and secure a political marriage with the infanta. However, the Spanish effectively hold Charles and Buckingham hostage and they return to England empty-handed.
February – October 1623

Accession to three kingdoms
James I & VI dies and Charles becomes king of England, Scotland and Ireland, but his coronation is unusual. His queen, Henrietta Maria, isn't allowed to attend as she is Catholic and the king wears white instead of purple because the appropriate clothes are unavailable.
27 March 1625

A controversial marriage
Charles marries Princess Henrietta Maria of France who was a Roman Catholic and therefore an unpopular match in Protestant England and Scotland. Despite a rocky start, the pair became devoted to each other.
1 May 1625

Assassination of the duke of Buckingham
Buckingham was Charles' favourite and a powerful but unpopular politician. When a disgruntled soldier assassinated him there was public rejoicing but the king was inconsolable.
23 August 1628



Parliament is dissolved
Charles escalates tensions with Parliament by dissolving it when it tries to increase its rights and privileges. He rules on his own for the next 11 years in what is known as the 'Personal Rule' by Royalists and the 'Eleven Years' Tyranny' by Parliamentarians.
10 March 1629

Birth of an heir
Charles, Duke of Cornwall and Rothesay, is the king's first son to survive infancy and later becomes Charles II. Charles I and Henrietta Maria eventually have nine children together, including the future James II & VII.
29 May 1630

Bishops' Wars
Charles tries to force the Calvinist-Presbyterian Scots to accept Anglican forms of worship. The Scots form a 'Covenant' to resist the changes and fight two brief but successful wars against him, known as the Bishops' Wars.
1639-40

The Long Parliament
After his disaster in Scotland, Charles recalls Parliament to ask for money. Tensions flare again when they make demands that he considers unreasonable. He leads troops to arrest five of its leaders but they've gone. Parliament seizes London and Charles flees.
1640-42

Execution of the earl of Strafford
Parliament sentences Strafford – one of Charles' leading advisors and a firm advocate of royal authority over Parliament – to death. Charles is forced to sign his friend's death warrant and he can never forgive Parliament for their actions.
12 May 1641

The Irish Rebellion
Most of the Irish population rises up against Protestant settlers. This angers Parliament and puts greater strain on its relationship with Charles.
October 1641 – May 1642

Civil war breaks out
The British Civil Wars officially begin when Charles raises the Royal Standard at Nottingham against Parliament. The first major battle at Edgehill ends in a stalemate.
22 August 1642

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First English Civil War
The conflict ends in defeat for Charles. Parliament takes London early and a series of victories tips the balance in their favour. Charles surrenders to the Scots but they sell him to Parliament.
1642-46

Battles of Marston Moor and Naseby
Parliamentarian commanders Sir Thomas Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell defeat Charles in battle at Marston Moor and Naseby. The latter ends the first civil war.
2 July 1644 & 14 June 1645

Captivity
Charles is imprisoned by Parliament and exploits divisions between it and Scotland. In December 1647, he persuades the Scots to invade England, leading to a second civil war.
1647-48

Second English Civil War
The Scots invade England and uprisings occur in England and Wales. However, the New Model Army swiftly wins the war for Parliament. Most Parliamentarians want to keep negotiating with Charles but his days are numbered.
1648

Pride's purge
After the end of the war, Colonel Thomas Pride arrests or excludes those in Parliament who wish to negotiate with Charles.
6 December 1648

The king on trial
Following Charles' role in provoking war, Parliament feel that the king can no longer be trusted and charge him with high treason. He is found guilty and sentenced to death.
20-26 January 1649

1649

A royal execution
The day of Charles' execution is bitterly cold but the king shows great courage and dignity. He even forgives his executioner before the fatal blow of the axe.
30 January 1649

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The Crown versus Parliament

Although he was the most powerful man in the land, King Charles I's dogged belief in the divine right of kings would lead to his bloody downfall

Words by Derek Wilson

In thinking about the constitutional crisis of the 17th century we need to be clear about two facts: what is often referred to as the 'English Civil War' actually involved all parts of the British Isles; and religion and politics were inextricably bound up in the conflict.

In 1603 the Scottish king James arrived in England by invitation of Parliament to occupy the throne vacated by the death of Elizabeth I. He ruled both realms, as James I in England and James VI in Scotland. Each country had its own Parliament. In 1625 he was succeeded by his younger son, Charles I - Prince Henry, the original heir, having died. At this time Ireland was a restless nation, technically subject to the English Crown and governed from Dublin by a Parliament dominated by English and Scottish settlers.

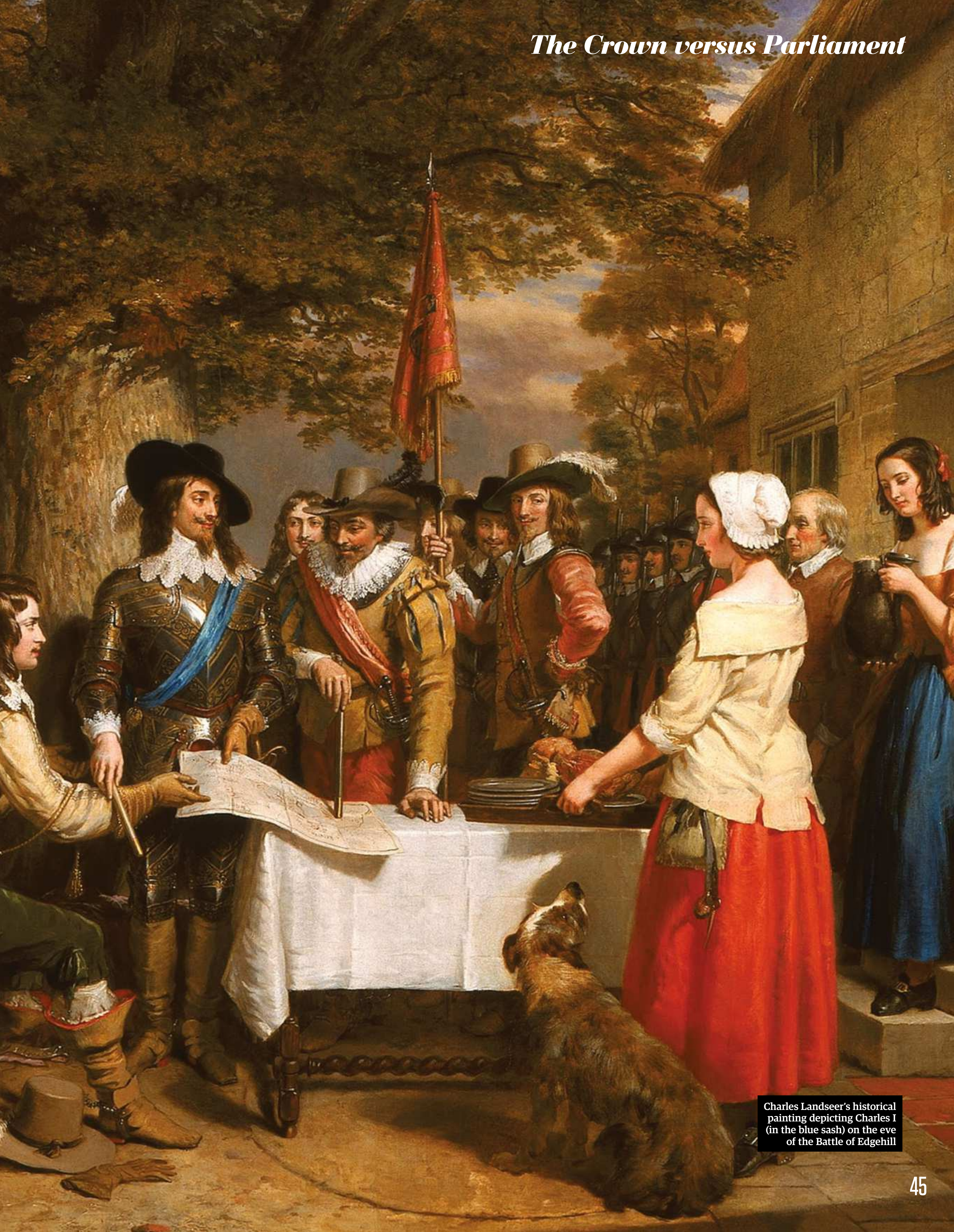
Charles I believed passionately in the divine right of kings, feeling that he ruled in the three nations as God's appointed deputy and that his will could not be challenged. This, theoretically, was accepted by all parties, who looked to the sovereign as the focus of national unity. However, ever since Magna Carta, earlier members of the wealthy and powerful classes had been concerned about preventing the monarchy from developing into a tyranny.

Over the previous century, the two houses of Parliament – Lords and Commons – had become increasingly involved in the law-making process, and an increasing number of members of the political classes believed that sovereignty was shared by king and Parliament, so that important decisions, especially taxation, required the approval of the representatives of the people. It was this difference of opinion over the nature of political authority that lay at the root of the crisis. It was further complicated by the religious issue.

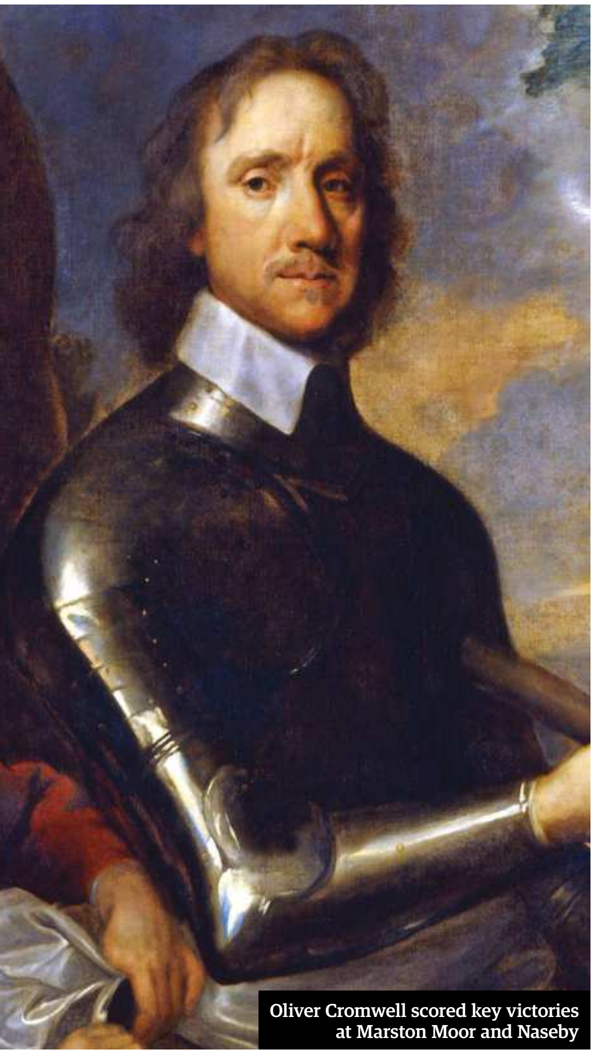
An increasing number of the political classes believed sovereignty was shared by king and Parliament

A century earlier England and Scotland had broken away from the Roman Catholic church and become Protestant nations. However, substantial minorities on both sides of the border still embraced Catholic beliefs. In Ireland the majority of the population was still Catholic and only controlled with difficulty by the Dublin assembly. King Charles was Head of the (Protestant) Church of England but was widely believed to have Catholic leanings and was married to a Roman Catholic, Henrietta Maria.

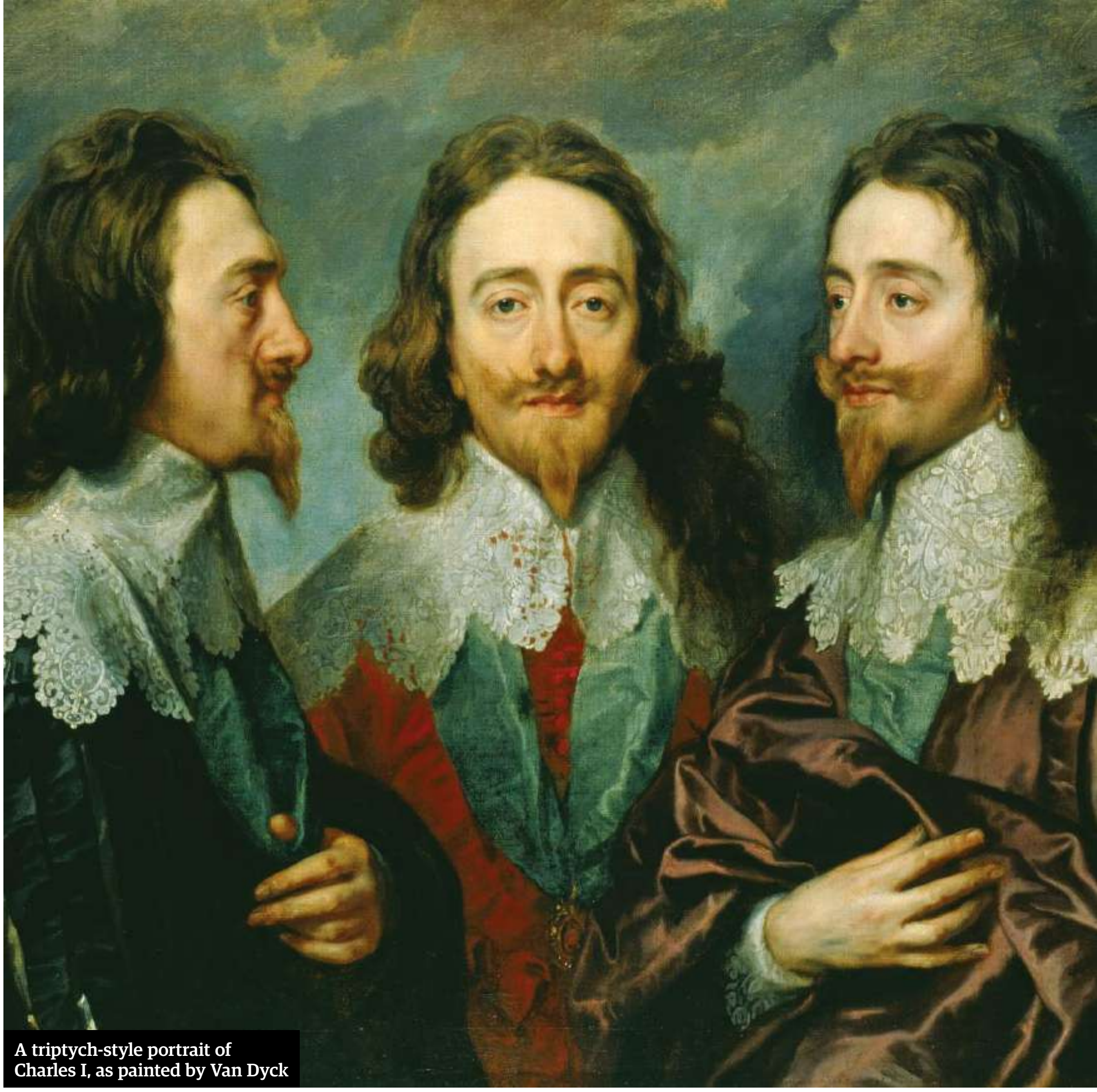
Constitutionally, the king was not answerable to Parliament for matters of religious doctrine and practice. Parliament could not challenge this, but many of its members were members of or sympathetic to radical religious groups who wanted to move the Church of England further down the road of reform. The situation called for tact, moderation, political adroitness and compromise, qualities Charles spectacularly lacked.



Charles Landseer's historical painting depicting Charles I (in the blue sash) on the eve of the Battle of Edgehill



Oliver Cromwell scored key victories at Marston Moor and Naseby



A triptych-style portrait of Charles I, as painted by Van Dyck

Ship Money

How one brave MP refused the king and ultimately changed the law of the land

Kings had the right, in time of war, to require coastal towns to provide ships for military purposes or to contribute money for the construction of ships. In 1620 Charles I abused this system in three ways: he levied ship money in peacetime, he imposed it on all English counties, and he did not earmark the proceeds for shipbuilding. This aroused widespread resentment and Charles abandoned what was, in fact, an attempt to impose a tax without parliamentary consent.

However, the king revived the tax in 1634 and several senior judges gave their support to the claim that ship money came into the category of prerogative revenue. A test trial occurred in 1637 when John Hampden, a Buckinghamshire gentleman and MP, refused payment. The verdict in the Court of Exchequer went in favour of the king by a vote of seven judges to five. However, the case had aroused so much interest that other prominent men refused to pay and the income from ship money dropped drastically.

In 1640 Parliament put a permanent stop to this tax in the Ship Money Act. Hampden went on to become a prominent speaker in parliament and a cavalry officer in the war. He died in 1643 as a result of wounds sustained at the battle of Chalgrove Field, near Oxford.

The reign began peacefully enough, because the king largely ignored Parliament. Since foreign policy was, in his view, a matter of royal prerogative, he involved English troops in the Thirty Years' War in order to aid his brother-in-law, Frederick V, the Elector Palatine. This proved to be a military disaster and a drain on the royal finances. When the House of Commons criticised the conduct of the campaign, led by Charles' favourite, the Duke of Buckingham, Charles simply dissolved the assembly. Lacking funds to continue the war, Charles resorted to 'forced loans' demanded from his wealthier subjects. As well as being unpopular, these failed to meet the king's needs. One result was bands of unpaid soldiers roaming the shires, terrorising ordinary people. Charles' response was to declare martial law, which only ratcheted up the tension. In 1628 he had no alternative but to summon a new Parliament.

Its members proved more intractable than their predecessors. Sensing that they could use control of the money supply to force concessions from the king, they presented him with a series of demands, known as the Petition of Right. This outlawed non-parliamentary taxation, imprisonment without trial, forced billeting of troops and the imposition of martial law. Charles' reluctant acceptance of the petition was seen as a major constitutional advance and was greeted with wild rejoicing. This proved premature. The king dismissed Parliament and ruled without it for 11 years.

There was nothing unusual about the monarch not summoning Parliament; kings and queens only sought the aid of the Lords and Commons when national need (usually money) made their support necessary. What made this hiatus different was its length and the fact that Charles had developed a personal mistrust of the elected assembly. During these 11 years the animosity between the king and Parliament widened and deepened. There were three main reasons for this: Charles' continuing attempts to raise money without recourse to Parliament; his religious policy, which steered the English church in a Catholic direction; and his provoking of a war with Scotland.

In order to finance government and meet the demands of his household expenditure, Charles had several potential sources of income. There were revenues from Crown lands in the form of rents and sales proceeds; loans negotiated with international bankers supportive of England; and import and export duties (tonnage and poundage) on certain goods passing through the ports. The latter was normally granted to the monarch for life. However, a disgruntled Parliament had declined to renew tonnage and poundage rights. Contemptuous of such attempts to constrain his lifestyle, the king, not only continued to levy the forbidden impost but explored other ways of augmenting his income. His ambition went well beyond 'making ends meet'; Charles was determined to create around himself an ambience of splendour – for example, by assembling one of the biggest and best art collections in Europe.

He harboured ambitious plans to transform Whitehall into an imperial palace on the same

> "The offender was fined £5,000, sentenced to be imprisoned for life and have his cheeks branded"

scale as the Habsburg royal palaces. He made his intentions clear by creating a new cabinet room in Whitehall to house some of the most precious objects in his collection. According to J Brotton's book *The Sale of the Late King's Goods – Charles I and His Art Collection*, in 1633 the joiner Peter Penson was paid for fitting "the king's rich cabinet with cupboards, cases, shelves and window shutters. Eighty-eight classical and modern statues stood on plinths... There were seventy-three paintings and drawings... The cabinets also contained fifty-four books and numerous drawers of coins, medals and gems."

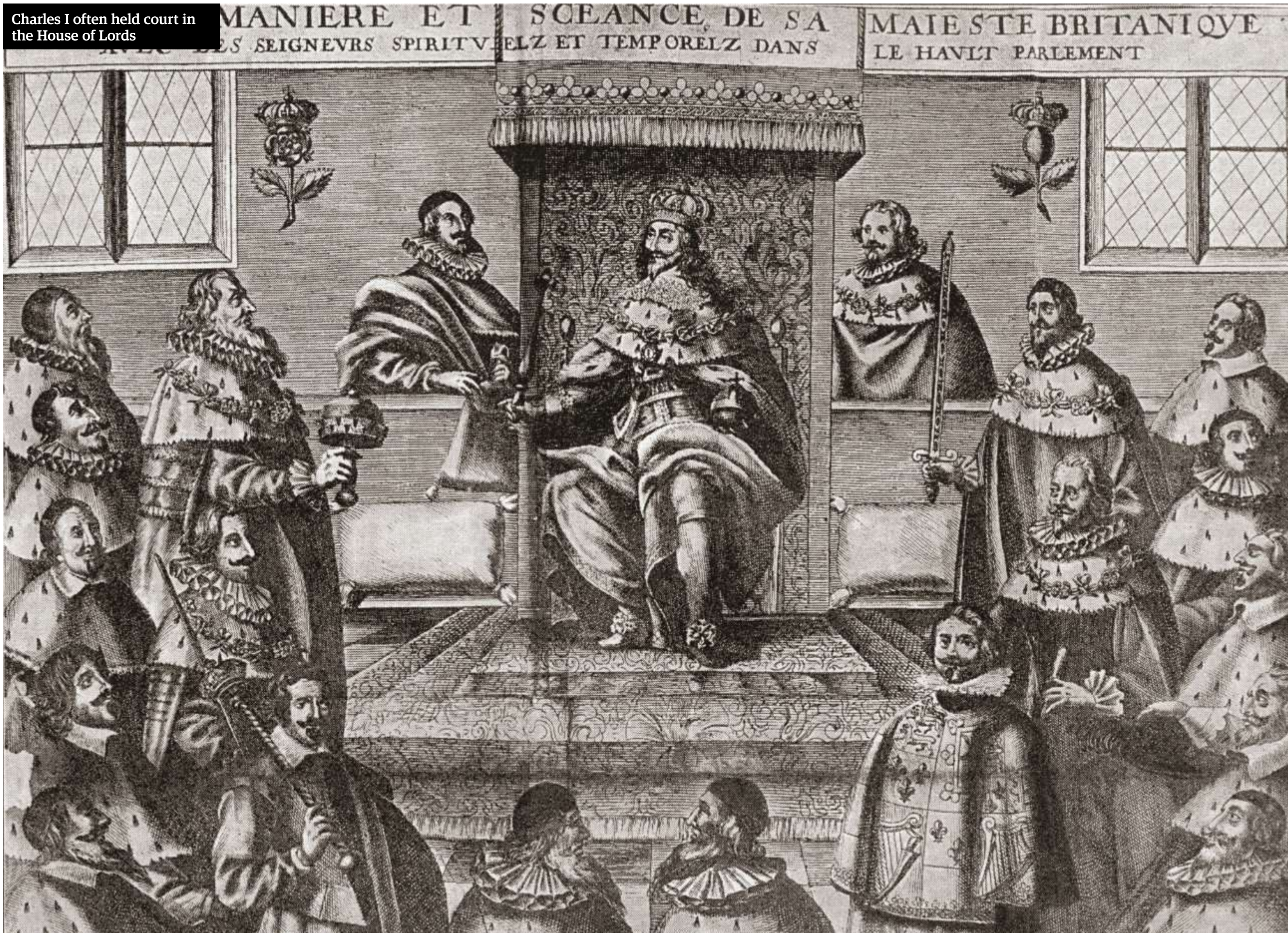
He amassed the finest collection ever put together by one man. It is not surprising that this display outraged many members of the political class, particularly when they reflected that it was they who were paying for it. Charles reviewed all aspects of ancient Crown revenue in order to clamp down on 'infringements' that had been sanctioned by long tradition. For example, he tightened the laws relating to royal forests (areas reserved for the king to hunt in). Boundaries were redrawn so that many landholders could be fined for having trespassed or extended their own arable land onto the king's preserves.

Charles' investigation discovered other customs dating back to feudal times that could be profitably reinstated. In the distant past landowners whose property was worth in excess of £40 per annum had been knighted at the start of each new reign. The king's investigations disclosed that many had not availed themselves of this right. They were fined for their negligence, and this imposition alone brought in £180,000. The array of new-fangled money-making innovations was felt most keenly by substantial landowners and merchants – the very men eligible to vote in parliamentary elections.

Charles took as his leading religious adviser William Laud and appointed him as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633. The king and the Archbishop were of one mind on ecclesiastical matters: they favoured 'high church' ritual, firm discipline, rejection of 'Puritanism', and uniformity. Laud's watchword 'thorough' indicated the rigid, uncompromising attitude he brought to the task of making church and state one politico-religious unit bolstered by rigid laws (such as censorship of books and journals) enforced through the king's prerogative Star Chamber Court and the ecclesiastical Court of High Commission. It is not surprising that Laud was particularly hated by opponents of the Stuart regime.

Even so, while Englishmen grumbled the comparatively few opponents of royal policy were firmly dealt with. For example, an attack by a lawyer, William Prynne, on stage plays was interpreted as criticism of the royal court and its personnel. The offender was fined £5,000, sentenced to be imprisoned for life and have his ears cropped and his cheeks branded 'SL' as a seditious libeller. Such acts discouraged criticism in England, but it was different north of the border.

In 1637 Charles tried to impose on the Scots a revised Book of Common Prayer with a strong high-church emphasis. In Scotland Presbyterianism was popular and a church ruled by bishops was



Charles I often held court in the House of Lords

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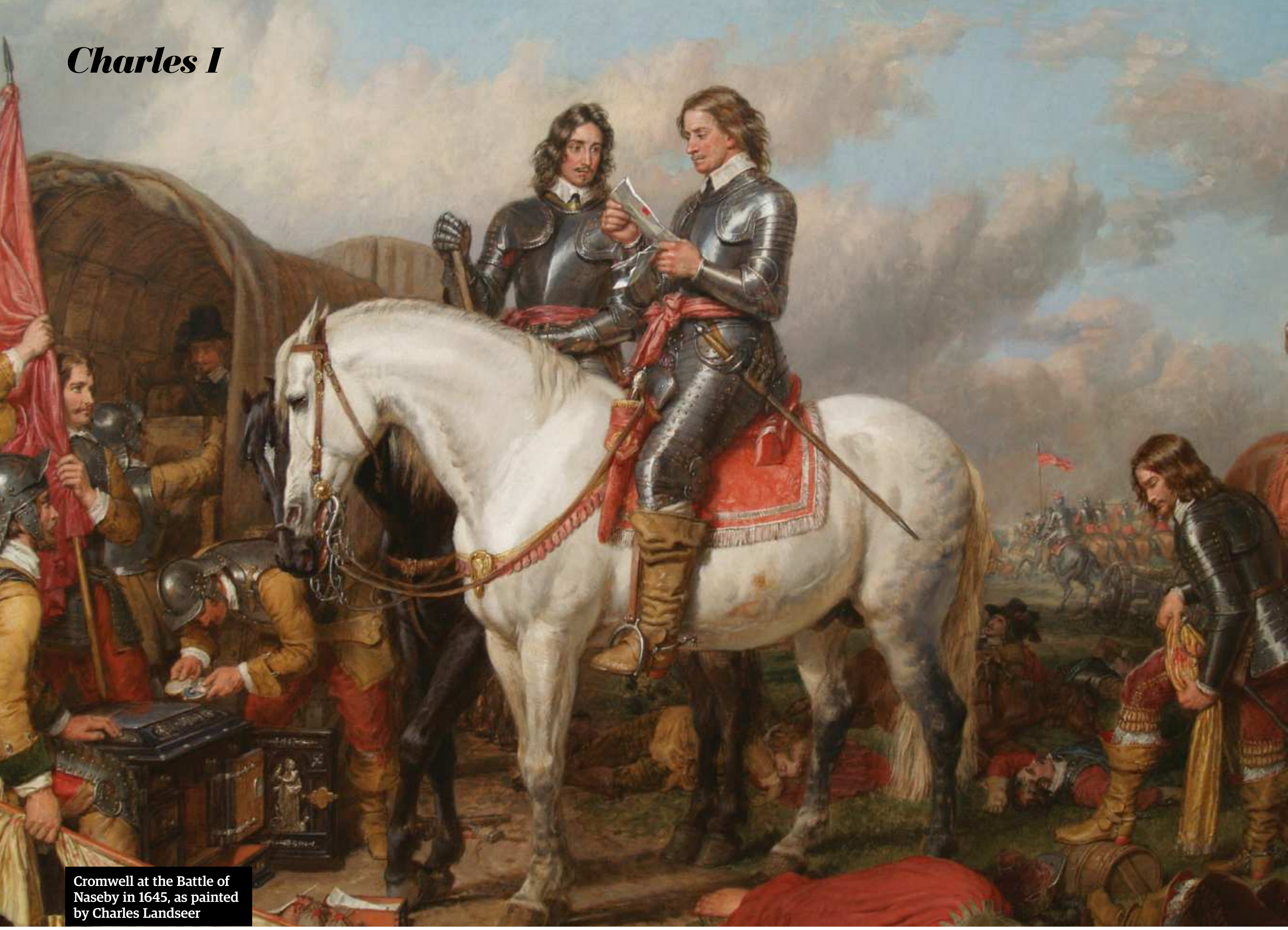


Cromwell at the Battle of Naseby in 1645, as painted by Charles Landseer

“The king could not ignore this defiance. He prepared to resume the war in earnest. For this he needed money”

only tolerated with reluctance. When the new service book was introduced in St Giles' Church in Edinburgh in 1637 someone threw a stool at the minister's head, which ignited a riot. In the ensuing days protests swept throughout the country.

Within months leaders of the revolt had formulated a series of demands set out in the National Covenant. This document, calling upon all Scots to resist religious change, was accepted by the Edinburgh Parliament and all citizens were required to sign it. But Charles dug his heels in and responded by personally leading an English army across the border. But when push came to shove, both sides drew back from a full-blown military confrontation, and what would become known as the First Bishops' War dribbled to an end. However, far from being subdued, the assembly declared episcopacy abolished.

The king could not ignore this defiance. He prepared to resume the war in earnest. For this he needed money. To raise sufficient funds he had to call upon Parliament. The new assembly convened on 13 April 1540. This 'Short Parliament' lasted a mere three weeks. The belligerent leadership refused to grant a war tax until their long list of grievances was met.

In August a Scottish army crossed into Northumberland. Charles again strapped on his armour and headed north. The sequence of military encounters known as the English Civil War (or, more accurately, the War of the Three Kingdoms) had begun, though, for the moment, it was a cold war.

The drift towards war was elegantly summarised by one member of the House of Commons: “We have slipped into this beginning of a civil war by one unexpected accident after another, as waves of the sea which have brought us thus far; and we scarce know how, but from paper combats, by declarations, remonstrances, protestations, votes, messages, answers and replies we are now come to the question of raising forces.”

The first clashes between the irresistible force of Puritan independence and the immovable object of divine right occurred in the Parliament house. In November 1640 a newly elected assembly was sworn in (the Long Parliament). Their position was strong and their mood intractable. They began by attacking the king's ministers. One of their first acts was the impeachment of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, Charles' deputy in Ireland and an extremist adviser who had suggested bringing an Irish army over to quell all dissent. Parliament sentenced the earl to death by bill of attainder.

Despite having promised Strafford his protection, Charles eventually signed the warrant for his execution, which was carried out in May 1641. At the same time the hated Archbishop Laud was arrested and conveyed to the Tower. He remained in detention there until January 1645. His enemies might have hoped that the old man would die there, as they could find no case against him that would stand up in a court of law. Eventually, he too was condemned by parliamentary attainder and beheaded on Tower Hill.

The radicals pressed home their advantage. The Grand Remonstrance presented to the king in November was a list of no less than 204 complaints against Charles and his close advisers. The king attempted a counter-attack on 4 January by coming to Parliament with a troop of soldiers to arrest five radical ringleaders, but the MPs got wind of his approach and fled in the nick of time.

Conflicts now spread beyond the capital. Both king and Parliament issued orders for control of the county militias. Queen Henrietta was sent abroad with the crown jewels in order to enlist foreign support. For his part, the king left London and headed north, calling upon all loyal subjects to join him. Several members of the nobility obeyed, bringing bands of retainers and much-needed cash. He appointed the Earl of Lindsey as his commander-in-chief. The Parliamentary leaders were also canvassing support and gave command of their army to the Earl of Essex.

On 22 August Charles I raised the royal standard at Nottingham and declared war on the parliamentary 'traitors'. The cold war was over. The military conflict had begun. Although statistics are notoriously unreliable, it has been calculated that deaths in battle and from related diseases were 120,000 in England, 60,000 in Scotland and a staggering 616,000 in Ireland.

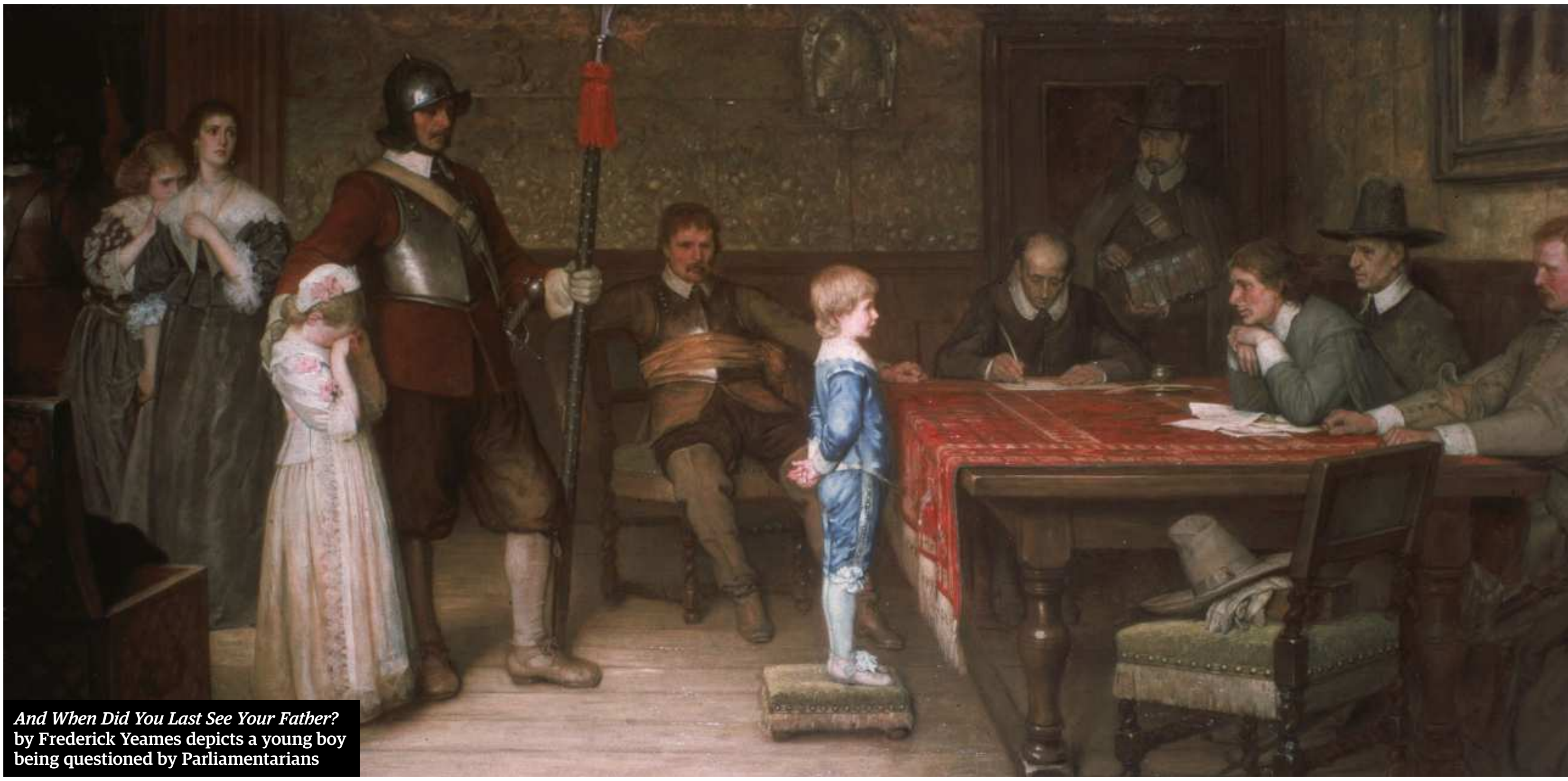
The first phase of the war lasted until May 1646. Parliament had command of the navy, which effectively prevented any Royalist aid arrived from abroad. On the ground, forces were fairly evenly matched. At the first pitched battle – Edgehill in Warwickshire on 23 October 1642 – 15,000 Parliamentarians (also known as Roundheads because of the cropped hairstyle favoured by Puritans in contrast to the flamboyant locks of the Royalist or 'Cavalier' officers) were confronted by 12,500 of the king's men. Losses were equal on both sides.

With much of his force intact, Charles could have headed directly for London, but he preferred to hold his army in readiness for another major battle. This caution enabled Essex to march to London and obtain reinforcements. Charles now made Oxford his headquarters. At this stage the Roundheads drew most of their support from the southern, eastern and midland counties, while the king was strongest in the north, Wales and the southwest.

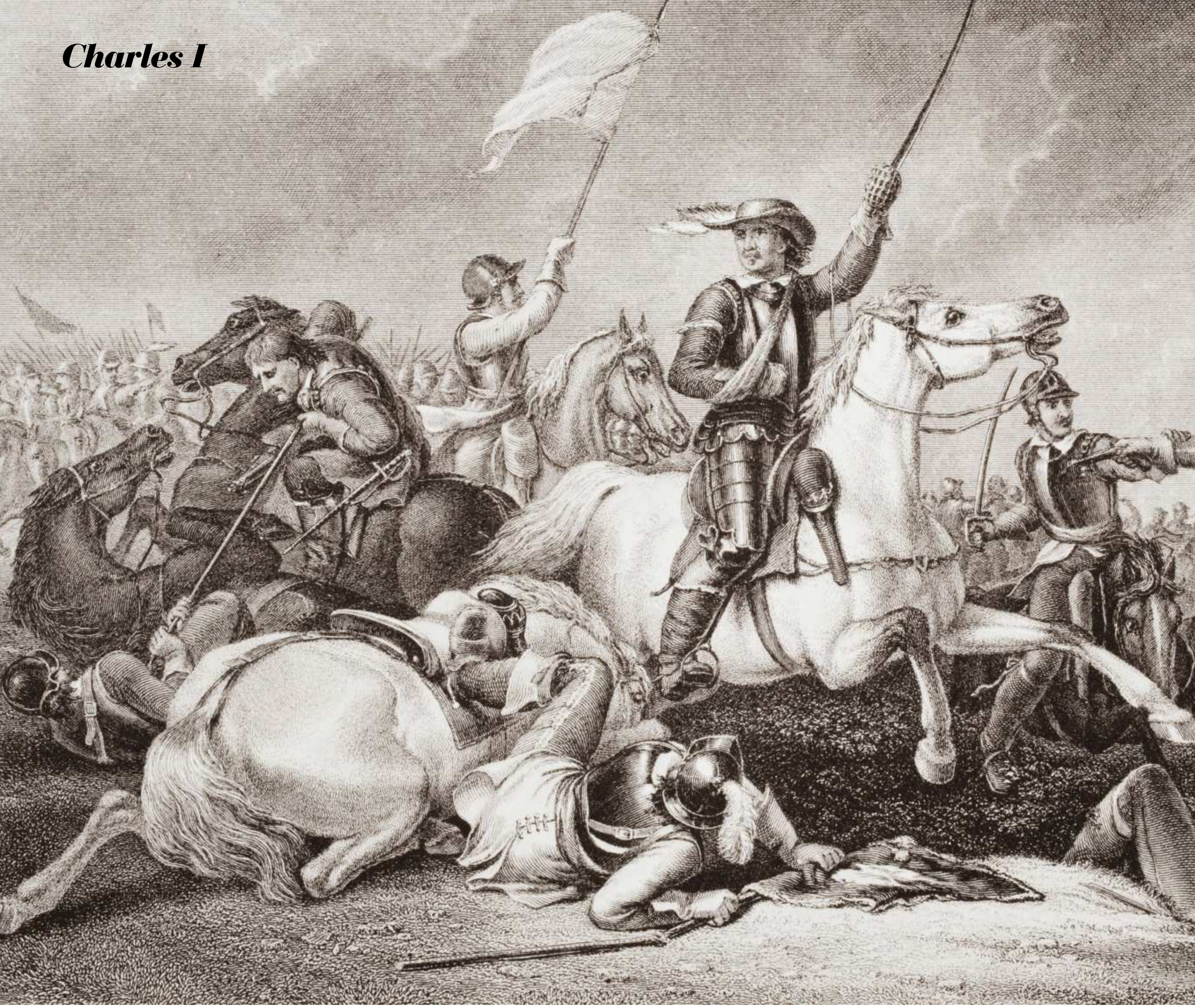
Throughout the following year the Royalists generally had the best of the fighting, a major coup being the siege of Bristol (26 July, 1643). However, two days later a more significant battle took place at Gainsborough. A bitterly fought contest for the town lasted three days and eventually left the Royalists in command. But what marked Gainsborough as different was the appearance on the battlefield of Oliver Cromwell – a Cambridgeshire farmer – at the head of a Parliamentary contingent known as the Eastern Association. Under his leadership this force grew into a highly disciplined and motivated unit which later became the New Model Army.

Cromwell made a point of recruiting and promoting men of Puritan convictions and military ability, rather than those of social rank. He once stated to his commanding officer, "I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows, than that which you call a gentleman and is nothing else."

The Petition of Right achieved major democratic reforms



And When Did You Last See Your Father? by Frederick Yeames depicts a young boy being questioned by Parliamentarians



“Charles’ army was completely shattered at Naseby. 1,000 men were killed and around 5,000 were captured”

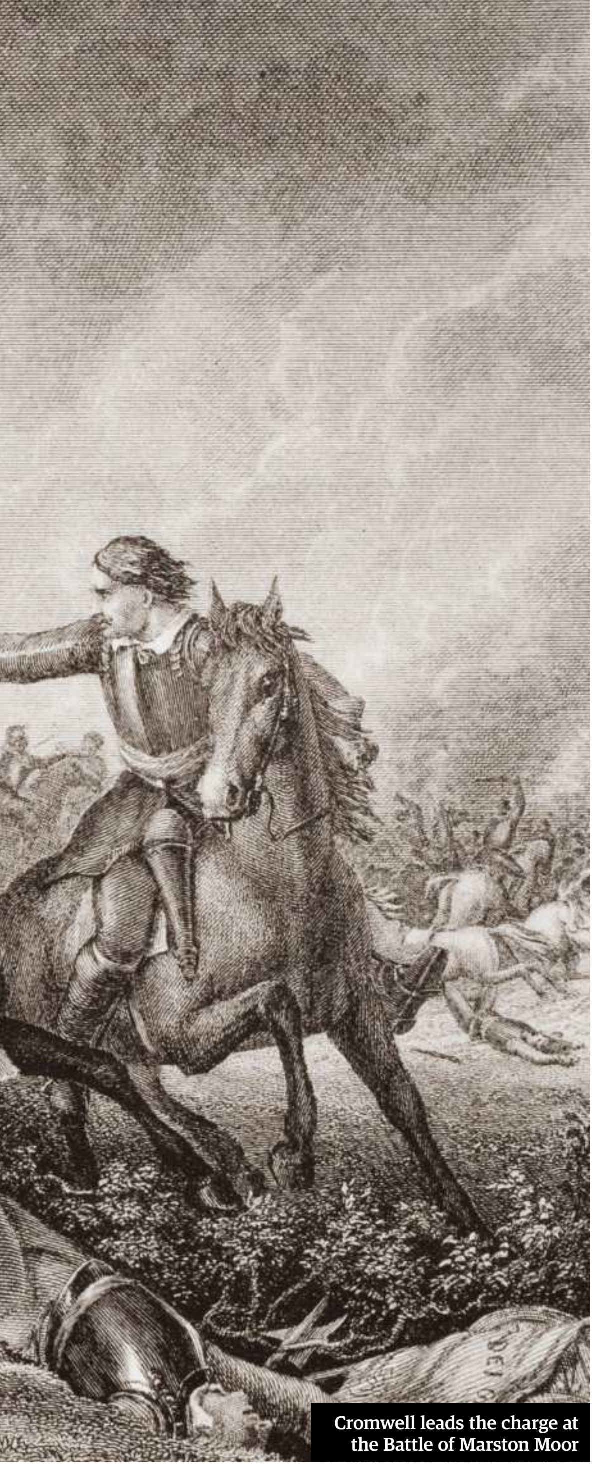
A major development occurred two months later when the Solemn League and Covenant agreed between the parliaments in London and Edinburgh brought Scotland into the war on the side of the Roundheads. When the Scots crossed the border in the New Year the balance of power in the north changed drastically. The Battle of Marston Moor (2 July 1644) was a major turning point. Fierce fighting continued until well after dark and, once again, the superior discipline of Cromwell’s men was a deciding factor. Royalist losses were 5,500 dead, wounded and captured as opposed to 300 fatalities in the allied army, which went on to take York and other former Royalist strongholds.

In 1645 the New Model Army came into being - a professional force well-disciplined and well trained. It was a direct result of the Self-denying Ordinance (3 April) by which Parliament decreed that all MPs with army commissions had to choose between political life and military life. The refashioned Parliamentary army proved its worth dramatically at the Battle of Naseby (14 June).

Led by Sir Thomas Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell, the Roundheads set off in pursuit of the Royalist contingent, which was intent on heading North to recover lost ground. Charles decided to give battle at Naseby in Northamptonshire, even though his 7,400-strong army was outnumbered more than two-to-one by the enemy. The Roundhead cavalry on the right wing were routed by Royalist horsemen led by Prince Rupert of the Rhine. He then made the mistake of pursuing the fleeing foe and leaving the field clear for the enemy to regroup.

On the other wing it was Cromwell’s cavalry that was victorious – and more disciplined. Instead of hunting down the defeated horsemen, he gave support to the Parliamentary infantry. Charles’ army was completely shattered at Naseby. 1,000 men were killed and around 5,000 were captured. Fighting continued throughout 1646, but it was largely a matter of capturing Royalist strongholds. On 5 May, rather than fall into the hands of the New Model Army, the king surrendered to a force of Scottish Covenanters at Newark. However, his captors used the king as a bargaining counter and handed him over to their allies for the payment of a considerable ransom in January 1647.

Charles was kept in honourable confinement at Hampton Court. The Parliamentary leaders



Cromwell leads the charge at the Battle of Marston Moor

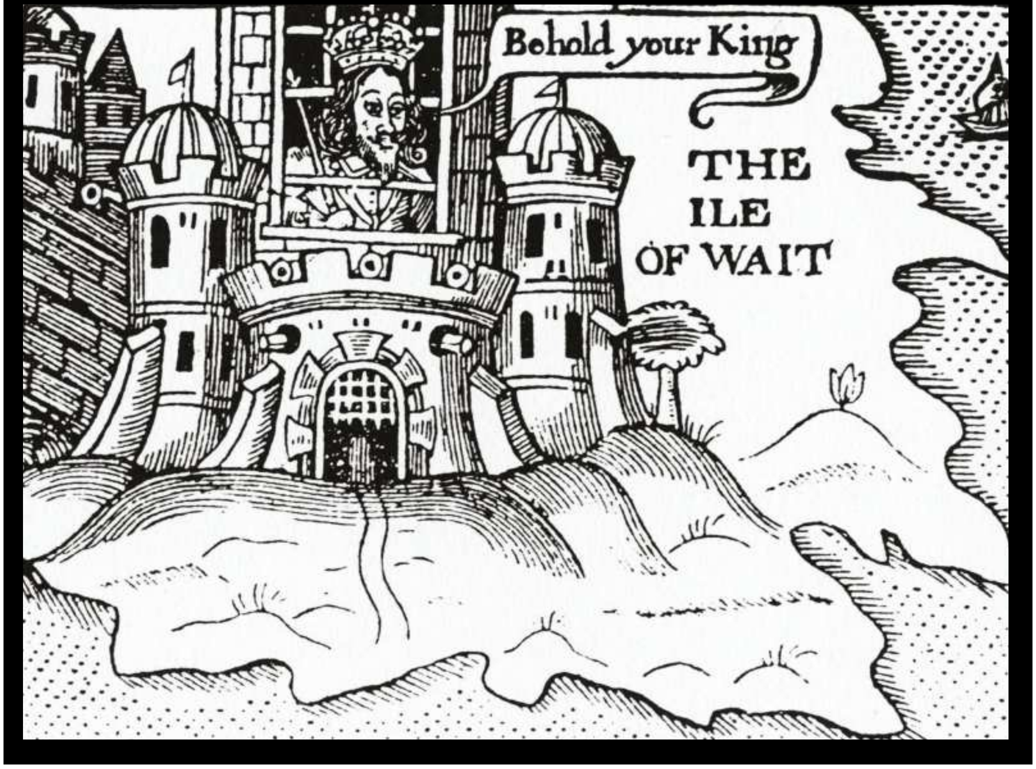
Charles at Carisbrooke

Charles I's jump out of the fire and into the frying pan

After escaping from Hampton Court in 1647, Charles made for the south coast, hoping to find a ship to take him across the Channel. He was helped by Thomas Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, and it was from his mansion, Place House, near Southampton, that he wrote to Colonel Robert Hammond, parliamentary governor of the Isle of Wight.

Hammond was the brother of Charles' chaplain, and the king mistakenly took him to be a covert Royalist. When he arrived on the island Hammond placed him under detention, treating him with respect and even allowing him to drive around freely in his carriage. However, persistent plotting by and on behalf of the king forced Hammond to restrict him to the castle. Neither side displayed a high degree of intelligence, and the story of Charles' stay at Carisbrooke has a distinct element of farce about it.

The king was able to smuggle out messages to his accomplices, but when an escape plan was put into operation, Charles stuck fast between the bars of his bedroom window (20 March 1648). Two months later the king tried again, but his plot leaked like a sieve and his guards had no difficulty in frustrating it. It was this plotting that convinced his enemies that he could not be trusted. In September 1648 Charles left Carisbrooke en route for London, a trial and the block.



hoped to reach some kind of constitutional settlement with Charles, and he entered protracted negotiations. But he still had hopes of reversing his fortunes. There were divisions in the ranks of his enemies. The English and Scots mistrusted each other and the leaders of Parliament and the army were vying for power.

In November 1647 he made a bid to escape and got as far as the south coast. There he made the mistake of trying to enlist the aid of the Governor of the Isle of Wight. As a result, he was imprisoned in Carisbrooke Castle. Now he made a secret agreement with the Scots, promising the establishment of Presbyterianism in both kingdoms in return for a Scottish invasion of England.

This proved to be the most serious of a succession of mistakes made by the king, because it opened him up to a charge of treason for having brought foreign troops to wage war against his own people and their representatives in Parliament. In January 1649 he was put on trial and found guilty. On the 30 January, King Charles I was beheaded before a large crowd at Whitehall.

There was still unfinished business for the victors to take care of. Ireland remained unsubdued. In 1641 Catholic nobles had taken the opportunity to mount a rebellion. The Irish Catholic Confederation, led by nobles and clergy, defied the Protestant government and established control of two thirds of the country. Only in parts of Ulster, Leinster and Munster did forces hold out loyal to the London Parliament.

In 1643 the Confederation became allied with Royalist forces in Ireland. The Catholic stand became internationalised when the Confederation received modest support from France and Spain and official papal recognition from Pope Innocent X. In 1644 troops from Ireland were sent to Scotland to help sustain the Royalist stand there. The objective of the Irish majority (encouraged by Charles' agents) to restore Roman Catholicism provoked the Long Parliament to pass an Ordnance of no quarter to the Irish and virtually ensured that the final reckoning would be extremely bloody.

In August 1649 Cromwell landed with his well-seasoned army, which was not only efficient but enflamed by a hatred of Roman Catholicism. Plague and famine added to the butchering imposed by Cromwell's troops in the purge that ensued. Though defended by some historians, the general's ruthless suppression of the Irish rebellion is widely considered to be the biggest stain on his character. Not until 1653 was Ireland finally subdued.

Meanwhile, in Scotland, Royalists and Covenanters combined in offering the crown to Charles Stuart, Prince of Wales, who put himself at the head of their joint forces in June 1650. Cromwell left Ireland to deal with the new threat, attacked Edinburgh and won a victory at Dunbar (3 September). He then pursued Prince Charles and his army into England. The final confrontation took place at Worcester (3 September 1651), after which young Charles fled back into exile.

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Our king, the traitor

After years of ruinous war, the king was made to pay the ultimate price

On the morning of 30 January 1649, a bitter, biting wind tore through the streets of London, enough to send men and women to seek solace in the sheltered corners of the city. Despite the frost, people swarmed expectantly to a makeshift scaffold outside the Banqueting House at the Palace of Whitehall. After all, it wasn't every day the king was to be executed.

Guided onto the stage set for his death, King Charles I faced out towards the city, separated from spectators by a swarm of soldiers. Anticipating the chill, Charles was wearing two heavy shirts to buffer his shakes so his people wouldn't mistake his shivering for fright.

Charles opened his mouth, ready to deliver his last speech, but the wind whipped the words from his mouth. Instead, the king turned to the men surrounding him on the scaffold: "I shall be very little heard of anybody here, I shall therefore speak a word unto you here," he began. "Indeed I could hold my peace very well, if I did not think that holding my peace would make some men think that I did submit to the guilt as well as to the punishment. But I think it is my duty to God first and to my country for to clear myself both as an honest man and a good king, and a good Christian." For the first and only time, Charles defended his position, a futile attempt to clear his name and defend his innocence. As his speech drew to a close, he stated simply, "I have delivered my conscience. I pray God, that you do take those courses that are best for the good of the kingdom and your own salvations."

He turned and muttered to his masked executioner, then dropped to his knees. Silently, the king prayed before leaning forwards and laying his neck on the block. For a moment, nothing happened. He then stretched his arms forward. It was the sign his executioner had been waiting for – Charles I was ready to meet his end.

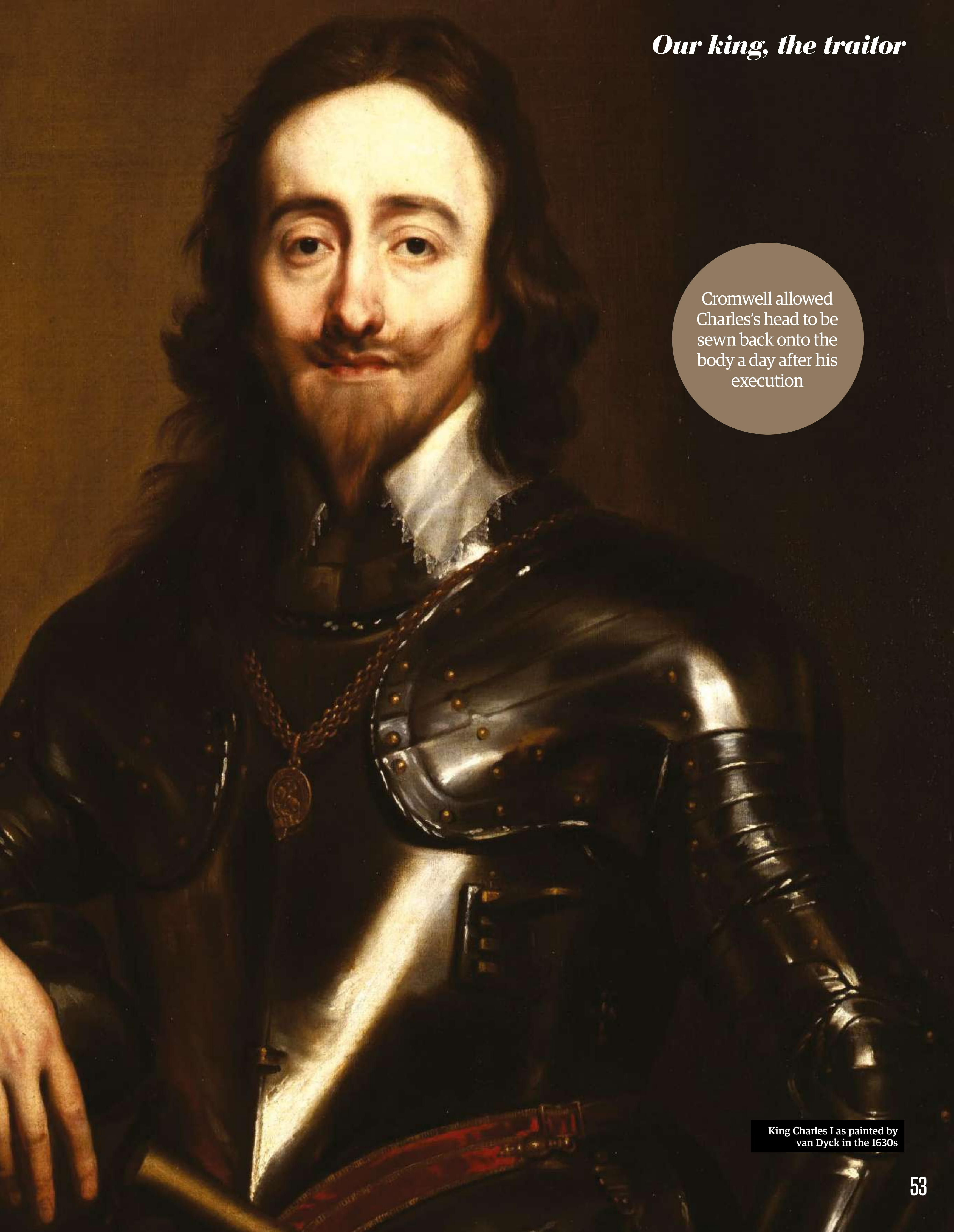
The axe dropped. A soft groan grew and reverberated through the crowds. Men, women and children slowly pushed forwards, handkerchiefs in hand, ready to soak up the blood of England's executed king. In silence, the executioner grabbed the decapitated, bloody head by its matted hair and brandished the lifeless face of Charles I at his people. The king was dead.

It was an unprecedented move that sent shock waves the world over, but Charles certainly hadn't helped himself, and perhaps inadvertently signed his own death warrant.

Early in December 1648, members of Parliament who were sympathetic to the Royalist cause were arrested in what was known as Pride's Purge. Left were those who supported the military, forming the so-called Rump Parliament. On 1 January 1649, this stripped-down House of Commons submitted an ordinance to try the king for treason – yet just the next day, the House of Lords rejected it, declaring the indictment as unlawful; after all, by his very nature, the king was above the law.

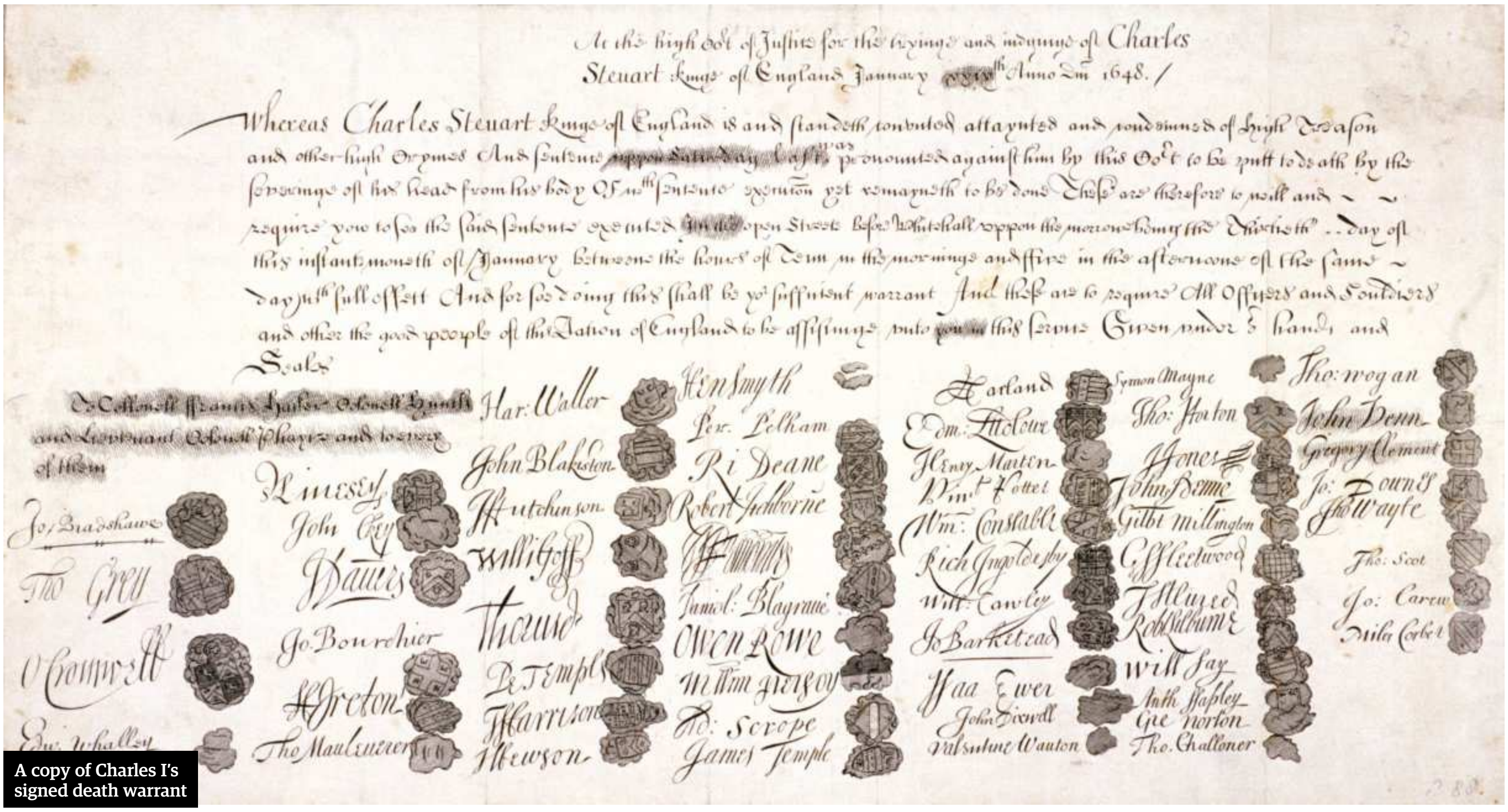
Incensed, the Commons declared itself capable of passing laws with neither the House of Lords' approval, nor the royal assent. On 6 January, it declared that a court would be set up in order to put the king on trial. A list of 135 commissioners and three judges was made, known as the High Court of Justice, though fewer than half of those nominated were at court for Charles's sentencing. Although not the first choice, a lawyer named John Bradshaw was made head of the court, while John Cook, a solicitor, was chosen as the prosecutor.

The High Court of Justice faced a problem. No king had ever been tried in a court of law before. However, a Dutch historian – and staunch anti-



Cromwell allowed Charles's head to be sewn back onto the body a day after his execution

King Charles I as painted by van Dyck in the 1630s



At the high Co[ur]t of Justice for the tryinge and judginge of Charles Steuart Kinge of England January [redacted]th Anno Dni 1648.

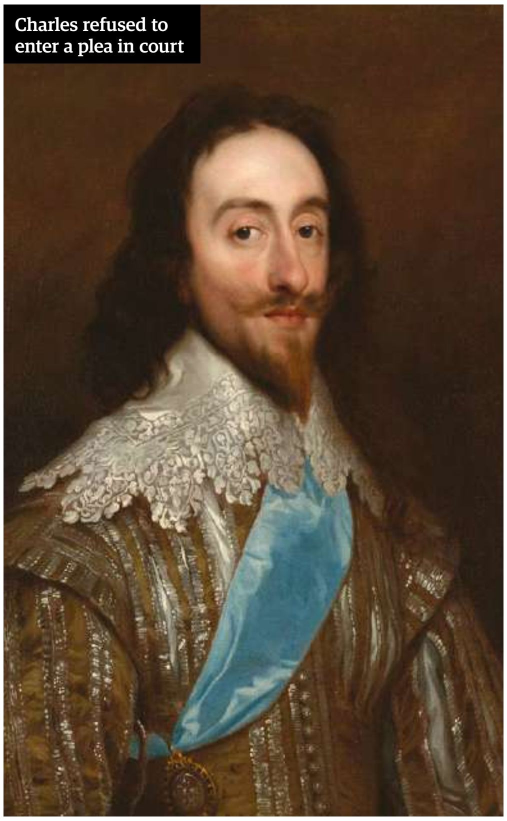
Whereas Charles Steuart Kinge of England is and standeth convicted attaynted and condemned of High Treason and other high Crymes And sentence [redacted] was pronounced against him by this Co[ur]t to be putt to death by the severinge of his head from his body Of w[hi]ch sentence execucon yet remayneth to be done These are therefore to will and require you to see the said sentence executed [redacted] open Streete before Whitehall uppon the morrowe beinge the Thirtieth day of this instant moneth of January betweene the houres of Tenn in the morninge and Five in the afternoone of the same day w[i]th full effect And for soe doinge this shall be yo[u]r sufficient warrant And these are to require All Officers and Souldiers and other the good people of this Nation of England to be assistinge unto [redacted] this service Given under o[u]r hands and Seales

[redacted]

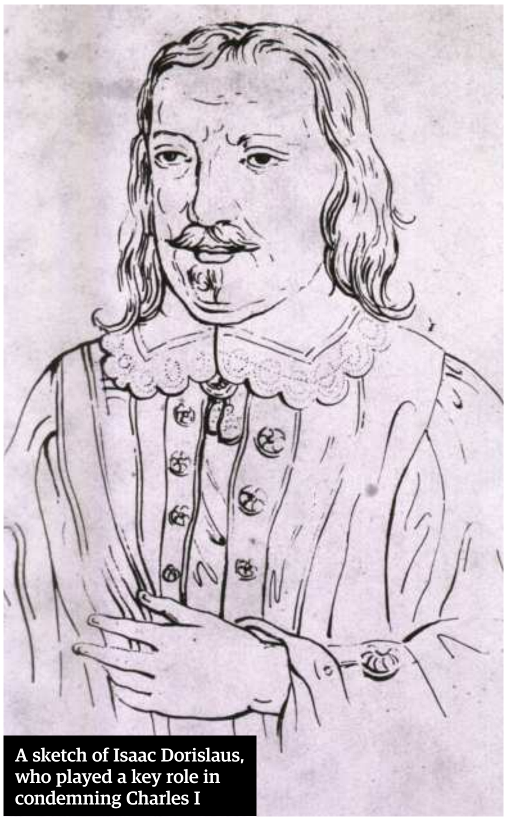
Jo: Bradshawe
Tho: Grey
O Cromwell
Edw: Whalley
M: Livesey
John Okey
J Danvers
Jo: Bourchier
H Ireton
Tho: Mauleverer
Har: Waller
John Blakiston
J Hutchinson
Willi Goff
Tho: Pride
Pe: Temple
T Harrison
J Hewson
Hen: Smyth
Per: Pelham
Ri: Deane
Robert Tichborne
H Edwards
Daniel Blagrave
Owen Rowe
Wm Purefoy
Ad: Scrope
James Temple
A Garland
Edm: Ludlowe
Henry Marten
Vinct Potter
Wm: Constable
Rich Ingoldesby
Will: Cawley
Jo: Barkstead
Isaa Ewer
John Dixwell
Valentine Wauton
Symon Mayne
Tho: Horton
J Jones
John Downes
Gilbt Millington
G Fleetwood
J Alured
Robt Lilburne
Will Say
Anth Stapley
Gre Norton
Tho: Challoner
Tho: Wogan
John Venn
Gregory Clement
Jo: Downes
Tho: Wayte
Tho: Scot
Jo: Carew
Miles Corbet

A copy of Charles I's signed death warrant

> "Stubborn to the end of his trial, Charles denied its legality and refused to respond to his accusers' claims"



Charles refused to enter a plea in court



A sketch of Isaac Dorislaus, who played a key role in condemning Charles I

monarchist – called Isaac Dorislaus played a key role in legally overthrowing the king. Appointed as a legal advisor to the High Court of Justice, Dorislaus used his studies on ancient Roman laws to base the charges against King Charles I on a law that stated that the military could overthrow a tyrant. On 8 January, the High Court of Justice officially opened. On 9 January, the king's trial was publicly announced, and the following days were spent finalising the charges, garnering evidence, and completing any final arrangements.

On 20 January, the trial began at Westminster Hall. Among a crowd filled with commissioners, judges and soldiers, Charles sat to hear the charges against him. Yet the king questioned the legality of the court and refused to plead his innocence. Charles didn't recognise the court, pointing out that the ordinance that had led to it hadn't been sanctioned by either the House of Lords or himself, exclaiming, "I would know by what power I am called hither… I would know by what authority, I mean lawful." For Charles, this became his response to any question – he denied its legality and refused to respond to his accusers' claims.

With the king refusing to enter a plea, the court continued as if he had pleaded guilty – standard practice should the defendant refuse to cooperate. The trial continued over the rest of the week, with over 30 witnesses providing evidence of the king's tyranny. Yet with witnesses giving their statements in a separate room to the rest of the court, Charles didn't hear their claims, nor was there an opportunity for their statements to be questioned.

By 27 January 1649, a verdict had been agreed. The king was found guilty and declared a "tyrant, traitor and murderer; and a public and implacable enemy to the Commonwealth of England" by the head of the High Court of Justice, Bradshaw. His sentence was death.

The king's blood, which had been soaked up in handkerchiefs, was thought to cure any illness

Only now, condemned to die, did Charles attempt to defend himself. But for the king, it was too little too late. Instead of hearing his plea, the court informed the king that the time had passed to defend himself, and he was quickly ushered out of the court by soldiers. Over the course of that day and the next, Charles's death warrant was signed by 59 of the commissioners.

With the execution set for 30 January, the Rump Parliament set about abolishing the monarchy. An 'Act prohibiting the proclaiming any person to be King of England or Ireland, or the Dominions thereof' was passed (without Royal Assent) and put into effect the day that Charles was killed. As the blade fell on Charles's neck, the future of England was irrevocably shaped. For the first time since its foundation as a united country, England had no monarch; there was no king to rule the land.

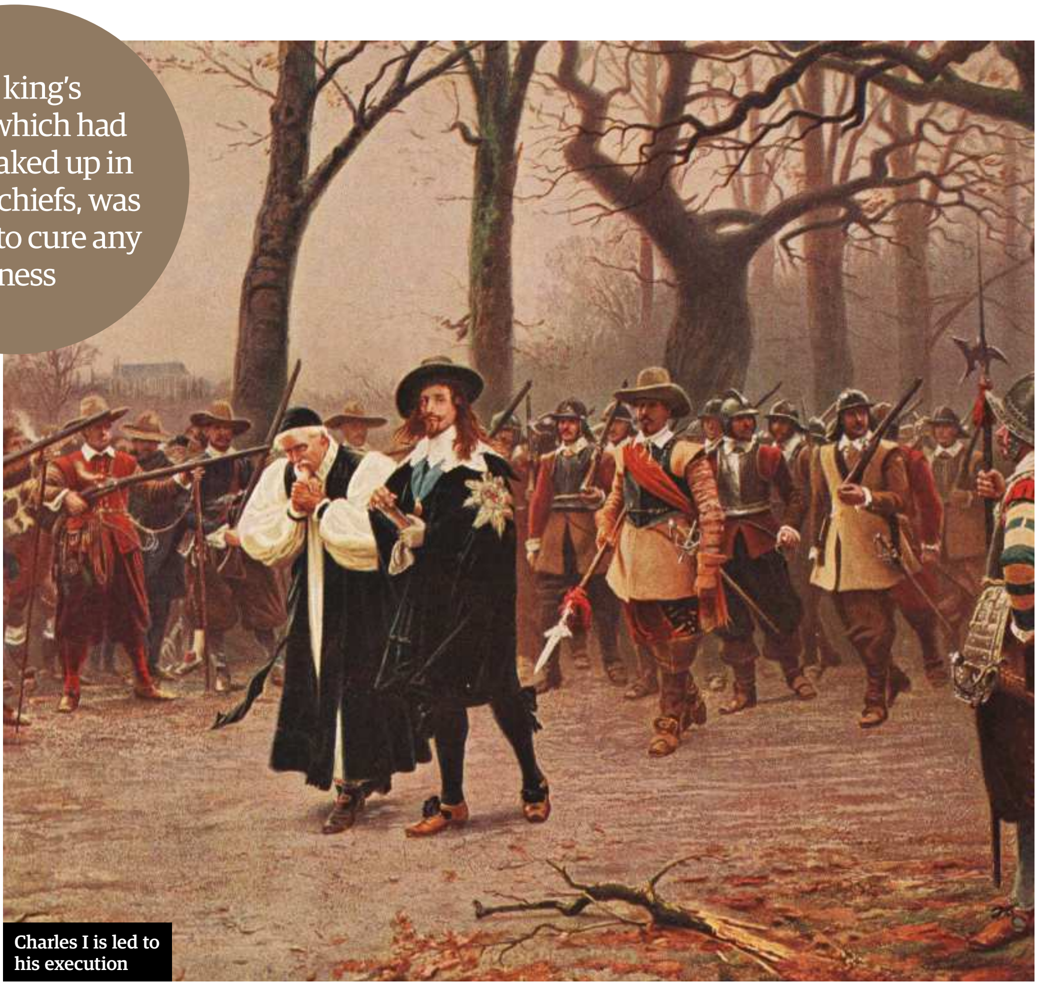
Cromwell had known that with Charles I alive, there would always be unrest; the nation was divided by tradition and innovation, and under Charles I's authoritarian rule, the two could not work alongside each other. Stubborn, arrogant and resolved on his divine right to rule to the very end, Charles I met his tragic fate. Not only was it an unprecedented execution of a king, it was the end of absolute monarchism. In death, Charles I taught a lesson to monarchs of all nations that followed - and those that chose not to listen and instead to pursued their own autocratic rule faced a wrath that likewise couldn't be quelled without bloodshed.

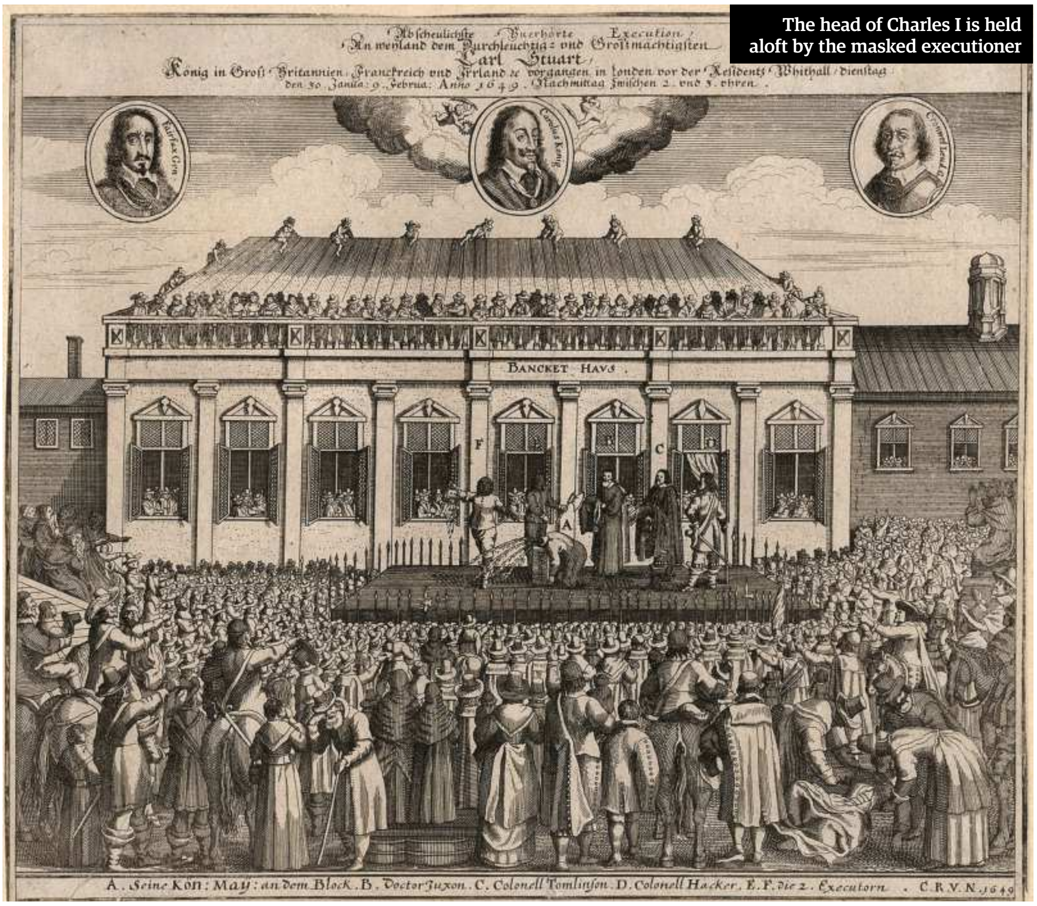
Who killed the king?

The probable executioner of Charles I

For centuries, the identity of the man who took the life of King Charles I has remained a mystery; the executioner was masked, and even when the king's decapitated head was presented to the crowd, the axeman remained mute so that his voice couldn't be recognised. However, with the beheading over in one swift swing of the axe blade, there's no doubt that the executioner was experienced. One notorious executioner has long been held as prime suspect: Richard Brandon. Initially approached by Cromwell's forces and offered £30 for the position, it's known that Brandon refused to execute the king. Whether the man caved in later after threats or offers of more money, however, is unknown.

Brandon himself had inherited his trade from his father, an equally infamous executioner called Gregory Brandon, whose first name became synonymous with death. After his son took up the mantle, he found himself branded with the nickname 'Young Gregory', and collectively the family business, known as 'the Gregorian tree', became a synonym for the Tyburn gallows.


Charles I is led to his execution


Abſcheulichſte Unerhörte Execution
An weyland dem Durchleuchtig: und Großmächtigſten
Carl Stuart
König in Groß Britannien, Franckreich und Irrland etc vorgangen in londen vor der Reſidentz Whithall / dienſtag den 30 Janua: 9 Februa: Anno 1649. Nachmittag zwiſchen 2. und 3. uhren.
BANCKET HAVS
A
C
F
A. Seine Kön: May: an dem Block. B. Doctor Juxon. C. Colonell Tomlinſon. D. Colonell Hacker. E. F. die 2. Executorn. C.R.V.N. 1649
The head of Charles I is held aloft by the masked executioner

©Alamy, Getty Images

The Interregnum

Without a monarchy, England had to build a new political system from scratch – no mean feat for a brand new republic

Words by Derek Wilson

For 11 years, nine weeks and six days (30 January 1649 – 8 May 1660), England, Scotland and Ireland ceased to be a kingdom. The execution of Charles I left power technically in the hands of Parliament, but in fact it was the army leaders who were in control.

Mounting differences between Charles' enemies over what to do with the king had led to Pride's Purge in December 1648. Colonel Thomas Pride barred entrance to the parliament house to all MPs who were opposed to putting the monarch on trial (231 in all), thus leaving a 'rump' of the Long Parliament left to conduct business. The House of Lords was abolished and a Council of State consisting of 41 members was established as the executive body.

The period of 1649 to 1653 is known as the 'Commonwealth'. Perhaps because its membership was so small the Rump Parliament brought into being legislation of long-lasting importance. There was a strong mercantile element in the assembly and this largely accounts for laws to develop and protect England's commercial and colonial interests. The Navigation Act of 1651 (the first of several such Acts) prevented English colonies trading directly with other nations with an aim to ensure a favourable balance of trade (exports exceeding imports) and to strengthen the nation against the rivalry of other countries – particularly the Dutch.

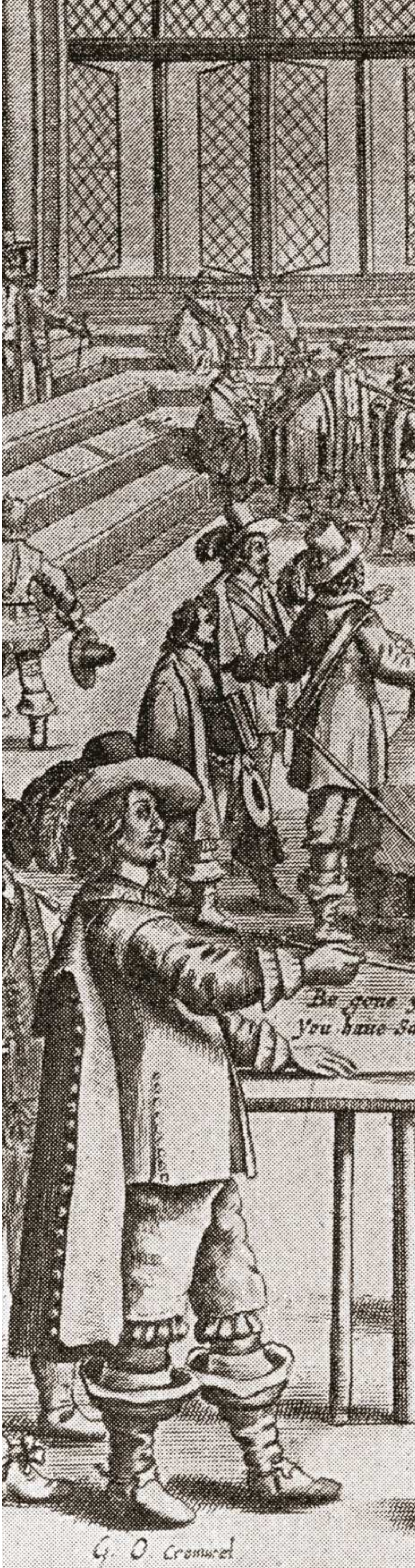
The Commonwealth parliament made strong efforts to settle England's religious differences. Much of the quarrel with Charles I and Archbishop Laud had been to do with their attempts to force everyone into an Anglican mould when most Puritans favoured a Presbyterian or Independent form of church government. Episcopacy had been abolished in 1646 and replaced with a Presbyterian-style church government based on the equality of all ministers of religion. The Rump Parliament repeated Elizabethan legislation forcing worshippers to attend their parish churches and introduced an unprecedented level of religious toleration.

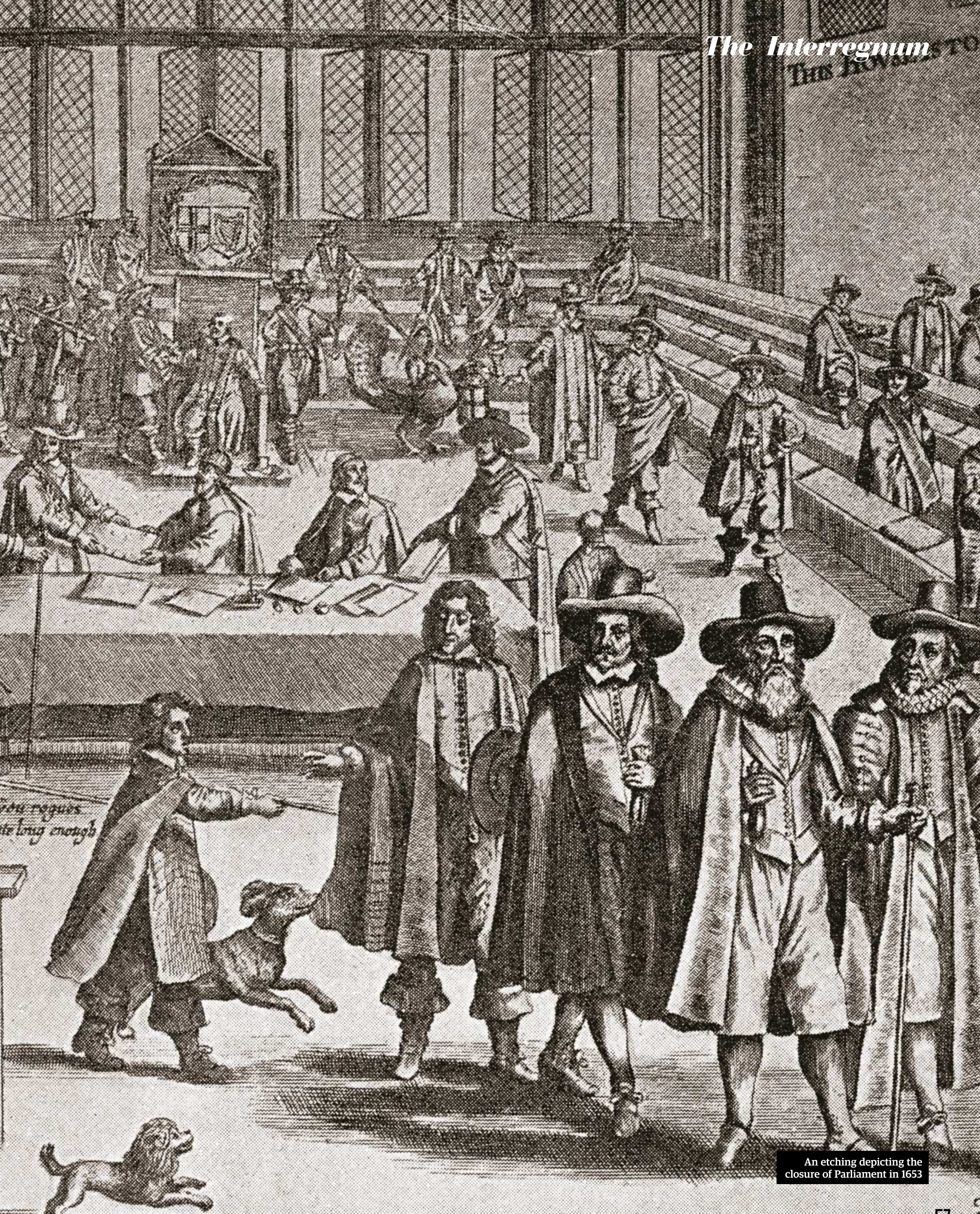
However, freedom could not be allowed to go too far. Over the previous 50 years, a variety of Christian and pseudo-Christian sects had emerged – Quakers, Baptists, Ranters, Levellers, Diggers and Muggletonians – each claiming exclusive possession of truth and proposing the re-ordering of society. As such, Parliament now set up a Committee for the Propagation of the Gospel, designed to oversee and control all religious teaching by issuing certificates to approved preachers. A Blasphemy Act was also brought in to curb extremists in 1650. While the Puritan regime was more tolerant than Laud's attempts to enforce high-church uniformity, the nation's leaders still found it necessary to restrict religious activity and bring it under the control of statute law.

England's new leaders were faced with the problem of paying for the work of government and the ongoing military action in Ireland and Scotland. One source of revenue was property confiscated from Royalists and from the Church. There were two ways of profiting from lands owned by the king's supporters: the lands could be offered on the open market or sold back to the original owners.

While this proved popular to speculators and to landowners who were eager to extend their holdings, the policy largely backfired by protracting the animosities between rivals in the shires at a time when healing wounds and reducing divisions should have been the utmost priorities. Furthermore, such policies did not cover the shortfall in government expenditure.

As a result, it was necessary to impose new taxes – one on property and another, an excise duty, on all manufactured goods. As you may expect,

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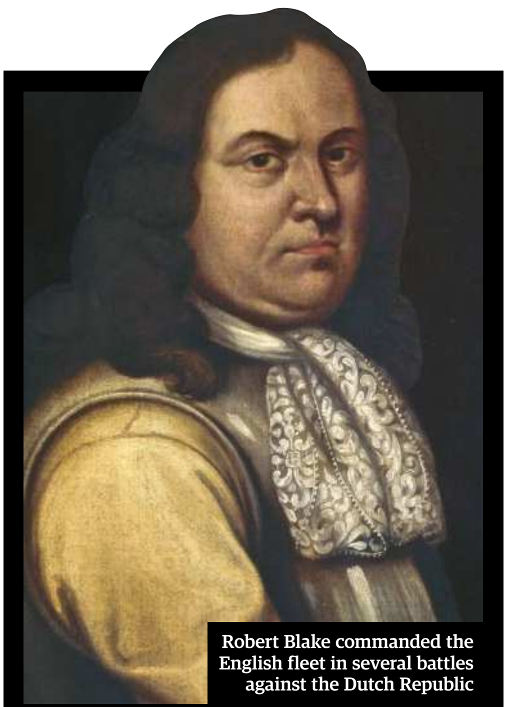
An etching depicting the closure of Parliament in 1653



Robert Blake commanded the English fleet in several battles against the Dutch Republic

1st Anglo-Dutch War

The conflict that pitched Protestant against Protestant

As Protestant republics, there should have been a natural affinity between England and the Dutch Republic – Cromwell even hoped that they might merge into one confederation. However, commercial rivalry, Dutch internal political instability and refuge given to Royalist exiles led to a breakdown of relations.

In pursuance of the Navigation Act, several Dutch ships were searched and others were attacked by English privateers. The final provocation leading to war was offered by Admiral Robert Blake when he opened fire on a Dutch fleet off the Goodwin Sands for refusing to dip their flag as an act of courtesy on 29 May 1650. Several inconclusive naval engagements were fought in the ensuing months.

Trade was vital to the economic survival of both nations and each had pro- and anti-war parties, but the war had a momentum of its own. On 30 November 1652, a decisive victory by Admiral Maarten Tromp off Dungeness gave the Dutch control of the Channel. The admiralty made some serious operational reforms.

The following June, the situation was reversed at the Battle of North Foreland off the Suffolk coast where 17 Dutch ships were sunk or captured and 1,350 prisoners were taken. The English were now able to impose a crippling blockade on the enemy.

Peace talks began but the Dutch refused to be forced into an unfavourable agreement. The Treaty of Westminster was finally signed on 15 April 1654 and both sides turned their belligerence to Spain's colonial possessions. In England, the naval reforms were vital to the colonial expansion that followed.

Most of the republic's parliaments ended in disagreements, making effective rule incredibly difficult

> "The Dutch had the advantage, which added to mounting discontent with the Rump Parliament"

these were widely resented. The conflict with the king had partly been occasioned by taxation and now Parliament was imposing even heavier burdens on the people. Support for the Rump dwindled rapidly.

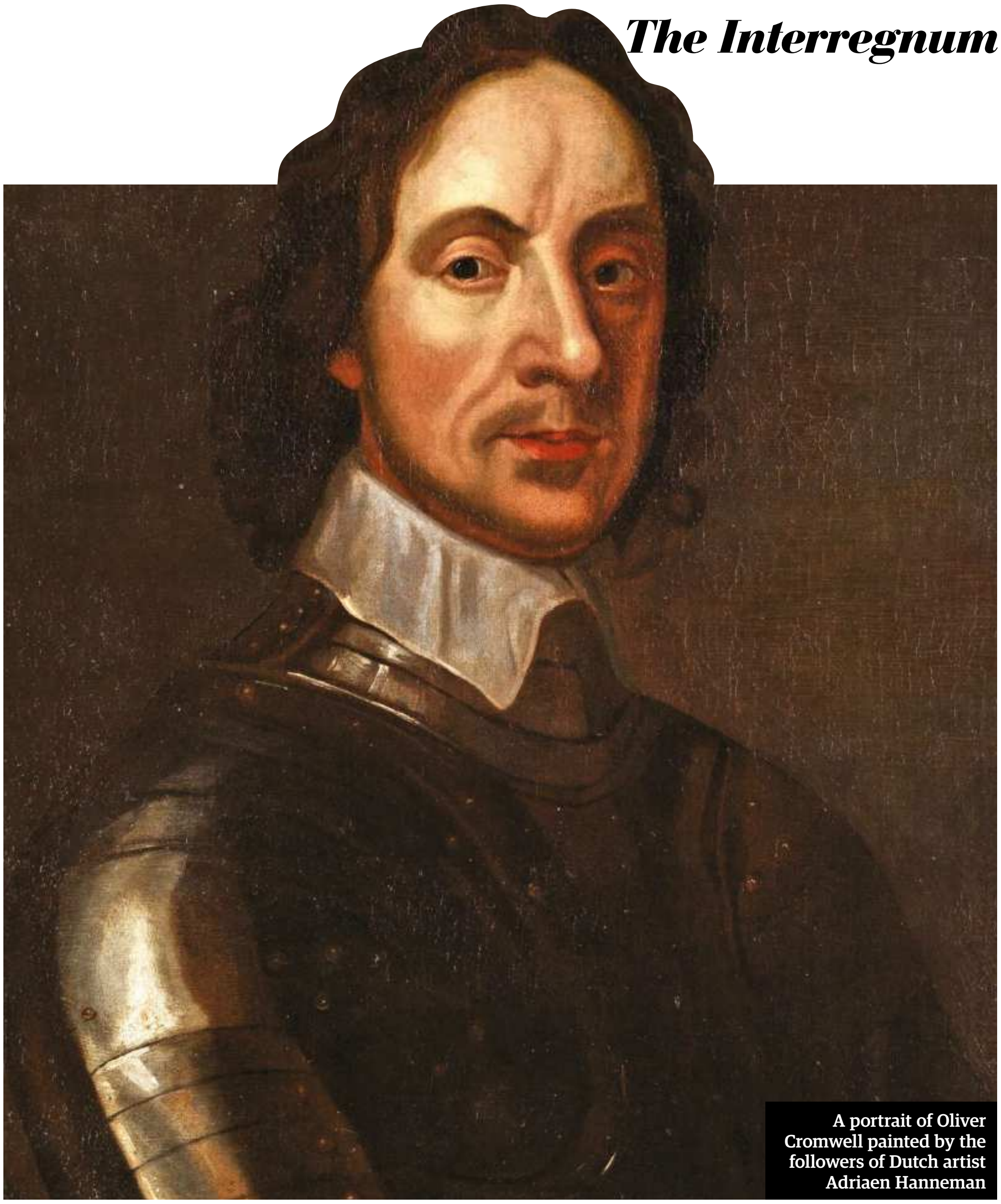
Now the Commonwealth leaders faced another crisis, this time in foreign policy. The development of England's naval strength during the Civil War coupled with the Navigation Act and other measures designed to boost and protect the mercantile marine inevitably brought the Commonwealth into conflict with the leading commercial and colonial power in Europe, the Dutch Republic. As Protestant republics, the two states had much in common, but official, diplomatic disagreements and clashes between ships at sea propelled them into a naval war, which was formally declared on 8 July 1652.

During the early months of the war, the Dutch had the advantage, which added to mounting discontent with the Rump Parliament and to a widening rift between politicians and army leaders. The basic problem was that England lacked a constitution. The king had gone – so who was to exercise supreme power in his stead? Oliver Cromwell and the generals wanted the Rump to dissolve itself and make way for fresh elections but Parliament countered by proposing reductions of the army, claiming that a large, permanent military force was not necessary in peacetime.

On 20 April 1653, Cromwell, as a member of the Council of State, was sitting in parliament, listening to the debate on potential arrangements for the election of a new assembly. Suddenly, he stood up and harangued the members.

"You are no parliament!" he shouted. He accused them of proposing arrangements that would perpetuate their own power, ranting wildly for several minutes before ordering troops in to clear the chamber. According to some accounts, he pointed to the Speaker's mace, the symbol of Parliament's authority, and ordered this "bauble" to be removed.

This display of bad temper solved nothing. Cromwell and the generals nominated 140 members for a new assembly drawn from the three kingdoms. The resulting 'Barebones Parliament' – mockingly named after one of its members, a Puritan leather vendor by the name of Praise-God Barebones – was a complete shambles. The representatives, chosen more for their religious



A portrait of Oliver Cromwell painted by the followers of Dutch artist Adriaen Hanneman

credentials than their political expertise, soon fell to unproductive wrangling. It lasted barely five months before declaring that it was inadequate for the task and dissolving itself.

Britain was in a constitutional vacuum. Only the army wielded any power and it was the military leaders who wrestled with the problem of devising a system of government from scratch that would stand some chance of achieving permanence. The lead was taken by General John Lambert, Lord Deputy of Ireland, who headed a committee that drew up what was effectively Britain's first written constitution, the Instrument of Government. It established a threefold political structure:

1. A Lord Protector. This office was for life, as the monarchy had been. However, unlike the monarchy, it wasn't hereditary.
2. A Council of State. This would assist and advise the Lord Protector, as the old royal Privy Council had done.
3. An elected Parliament. This legislative body would be subject to election every three years and sessions would last at least five months.

Cromwell was appointed Lord Protector and the first Protectorate parliament began work on 3 September 1654. This partnership proved no more workable than that between monarch and Parliament had in the old days. Members refused to give priority to the business presented to them by Cromwell, claiming that their first loyalty was to the members of their constituencies. On 22 January 1655, Cromwell dissolved this assembly.

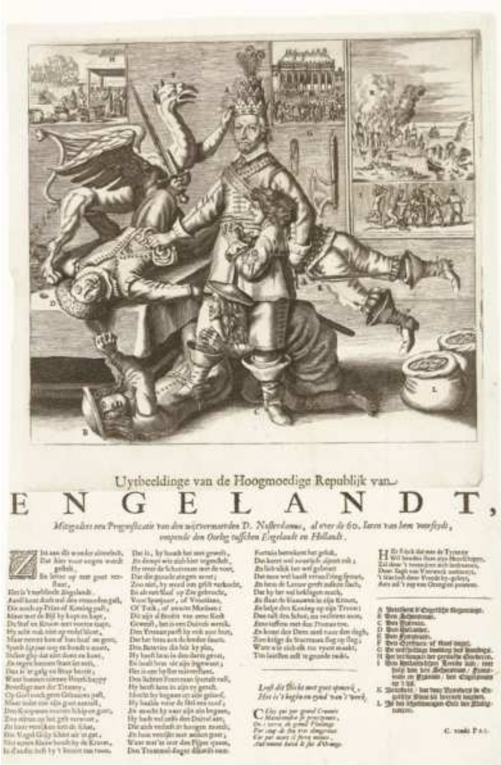
This was followed by a period of direct military rule. England and Wales were divided into ten regions, each under the control of a major-general who was answerable directly to Cromwell. In the eyes of Cromwell and his associates, this was necessary for three reasons:

1. Stability. There was a need to maintain law and order and to ensure the process of government, including the collection of taxes.
2. Protection. There were still pockets of Royalist resistance in touch with the exiled Stuarts.
3. Moral regeneration. The country's Puritan rulers were appalled at the decline in public morality, partly exacerbated by the war, and saw it as their responsibility to establish a godly nation.

Unsurprisingly, this regime was unpopular – the people heavily disliked the clamping down on well-loved traditions, which were now deemed "frivolous" or "popish". Also, the rule of the generals seemed to many to be no different to Charles I's "11-year tyranny", when he had ruled without Parliament. Just as the king had been driven by financial necessity to summon a parliament in 1640, so Cromwell acknowledged that the best way to gather taxes was with the consent of an elected assembly.

Reluctantly, Cromwell agreed to the calling of the Second Protectorate Parliament. It met for two sessions – 17 September 1656 to 26 June 1657 and 20 January 1658 to 4 February 1658 – but still the army remained in the driving seat. Some

Commonwealth coinage


Uytbeeldinge van de Hoogmoedige Republijk van
ENGELANDT,

A 1653 satirical etching depicting Oliver Cromwell as a tyrant of England, Ireland and Scotland. A griffon defecating coins crowns him

400 Members of Parliament were elected but the Council of State disqualified a quarter of them as being not godly enough. At this, another 50 resigned in protest. It was not a promising start.

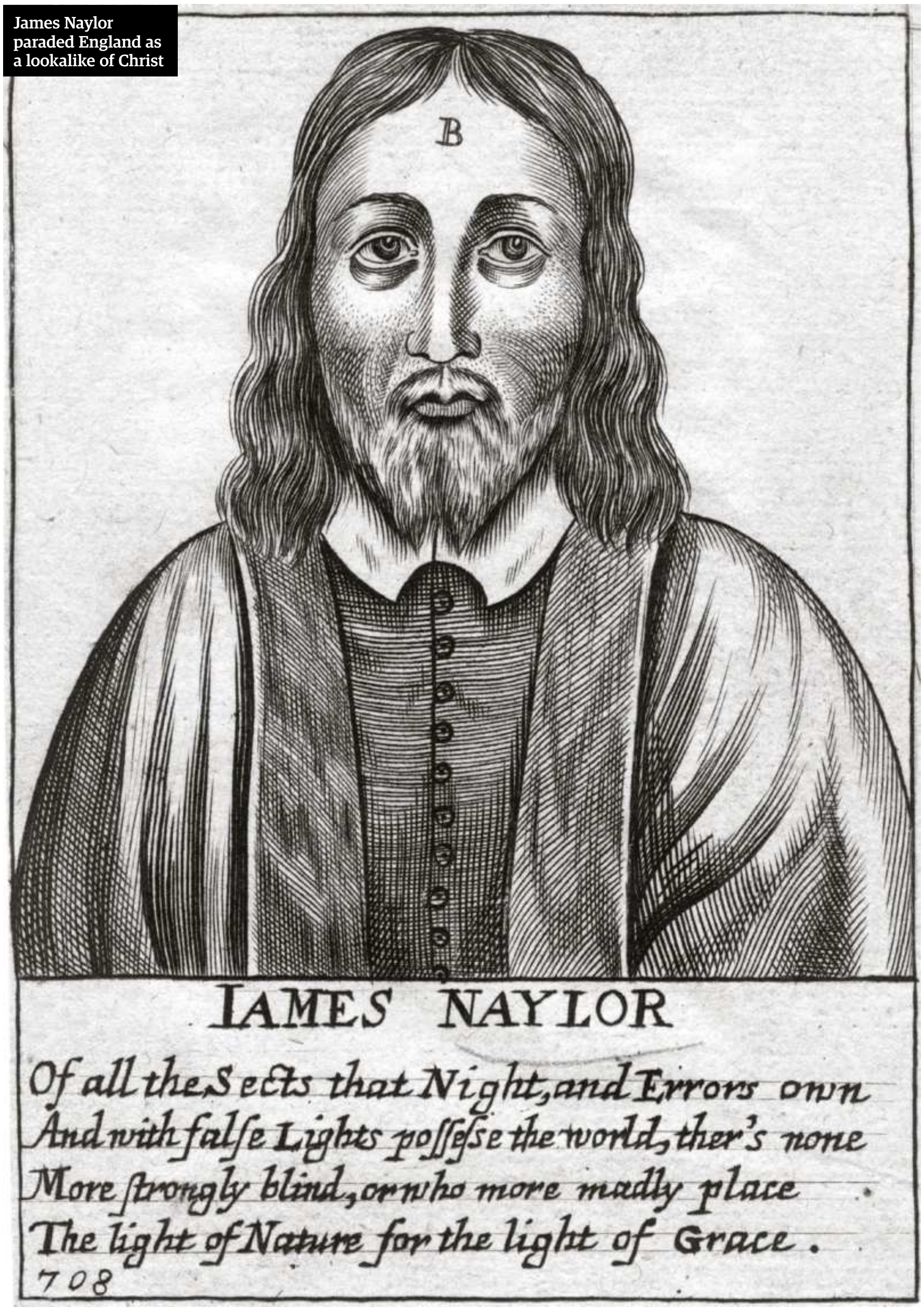
In January 1657, the politicians gained their revenge over the soldiers. A militia bill was introduced that sought to make permanent a tax imposed on Royalist estates for maintaining the rule of the major-generals. After a long debate, Parliament firmly rejected it. Military rule came to an end.

Cromwell was discovering the need for pragmatism. He realised that the country could only be ruled peacefully if there was a degree of religious toleration and he even went so far as authorising a secret mission to Rome, offering English Catholics freedom of private worship if the pope would stop urging them to rebellion. This olive branch was rejected. In fact, it was Cromwell's growing dislike of 'hard line' religious policy that somewhat ironically became an issue between him and Parliament – something that was pointed out in the Naylor case of 1656.

James Naylor, a Quaker preacher with a large personal following, went so far as to assume the role of a Christ lookalike. With flowing hair and a beard, he made a triumphal entry into Bristol while hysterical acolytes cried "Hosanna!" and "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Israel!"

To 17th-century Christians of any mainstream persuasion, this was blasphemy and the holy idealogues in Parliament had no hesitation in putting Naylor on trial. The deranged preacher was ordered to be whipped through the streets, to be branded and have his tongue bored and then confined permanently to prison. Cromwell was genuinely distressed to discover that his responsibility for the wellbeing of all citizens was in conflict with the merciless – and possibly unlawful – behaviour of the parliamentary zealots.

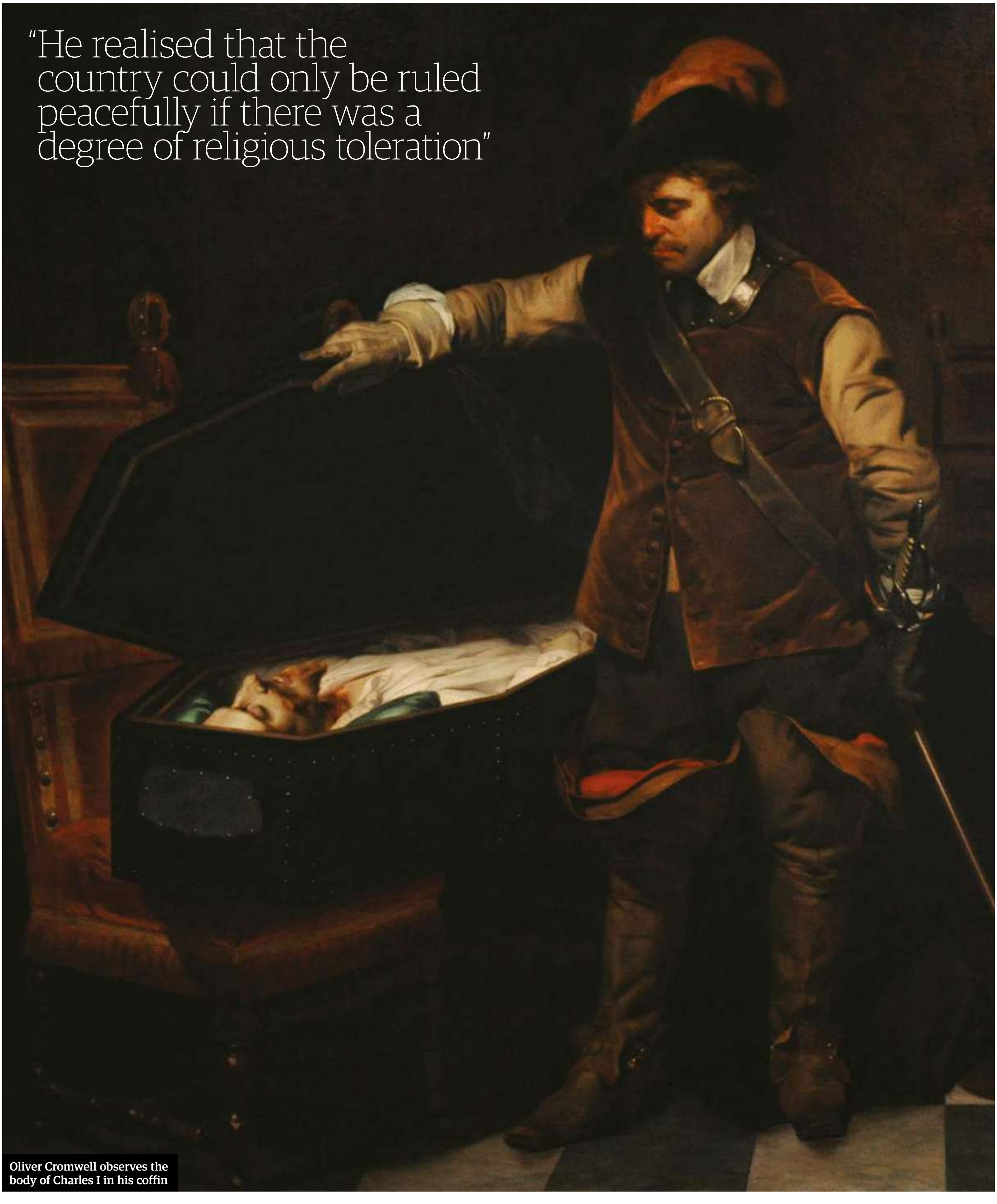
James Naylor paraded England as a lookalike of Christ


B
IAMES NAYLOR
Of all the Sects that Night, and Errors own
And with false Lights possesse the world, ther's none
More strongly blind, or who more madly place
The light of Nature for the light of Grace.
708

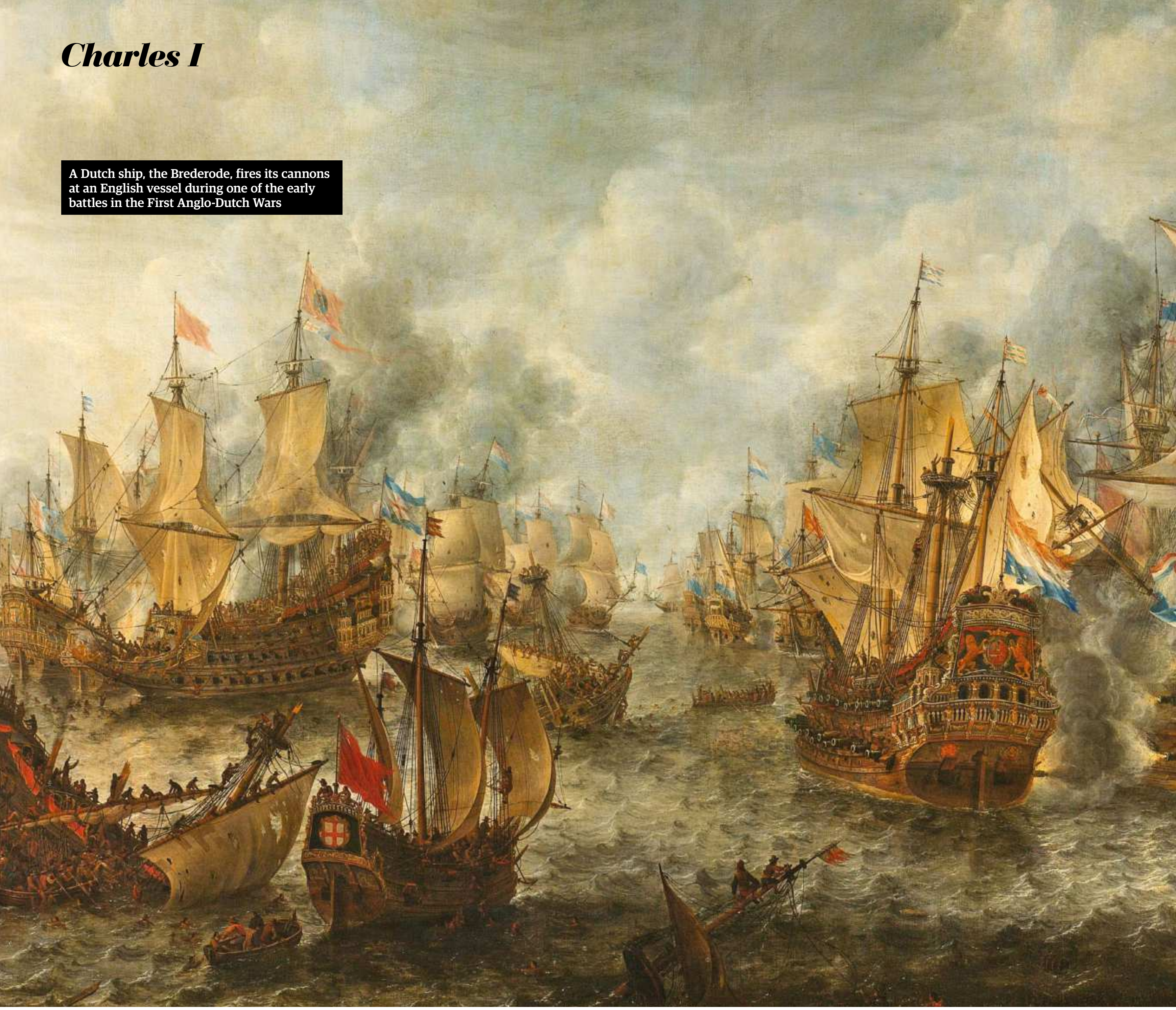
All interested parties were looking for a constitutional formula that would define where power really lay and provide the country with legitimate and permanent government. In February 1657, Parliament presented to Cromwell the Humble Address and Remonstrance, which, in a later draft, became the Humble Petition and Advice. It called for the reinstatement of an upper chamber and for Cromwell to be made king.

With the first he had no problem. The case of James Naylor had shown, as he said, the existing Parliament members "stand in need of a check." To accept the crown was an altogether more difficult decision. He had no ambition for the title or the splendid trappings that went with it – but would the establishment of a new royal dynasty provide the peace and cohesion the country needed? There would certainly be opposition from the army leaders who might with reason demand whether the nation had simply exchanged one

“He realised that the country could only be ruled peacefully if there was a degree of religious toleration”



Oliver Cromwell observes the body of Charles I in his coffin



A Dutch ship, the Brederode, fires its cannons at an English vessel during one of the early battles in the First Anglo-Dutch Wars

uncontrollable hereditary tyranny for another. Cromwell agonised over his decision for two and a half months against a background of speculation and rumour. He finally gave his answer to Parliament on 8 May. He could not, he said, "undertake this government with the title of king."

Cromwell continued to enjoy the powers of a king without the stigma of monarchy and he soon had cause to use those powers. Once again, Parliament fell to squabbling over the constitution. This time, many objected to the new upper house. The more ardent republicans drew up a petition and circulated it in London but Cromwell's patience snapped. On 4 February 1658, he entered Parliament and abruptly dissolved the assembly.

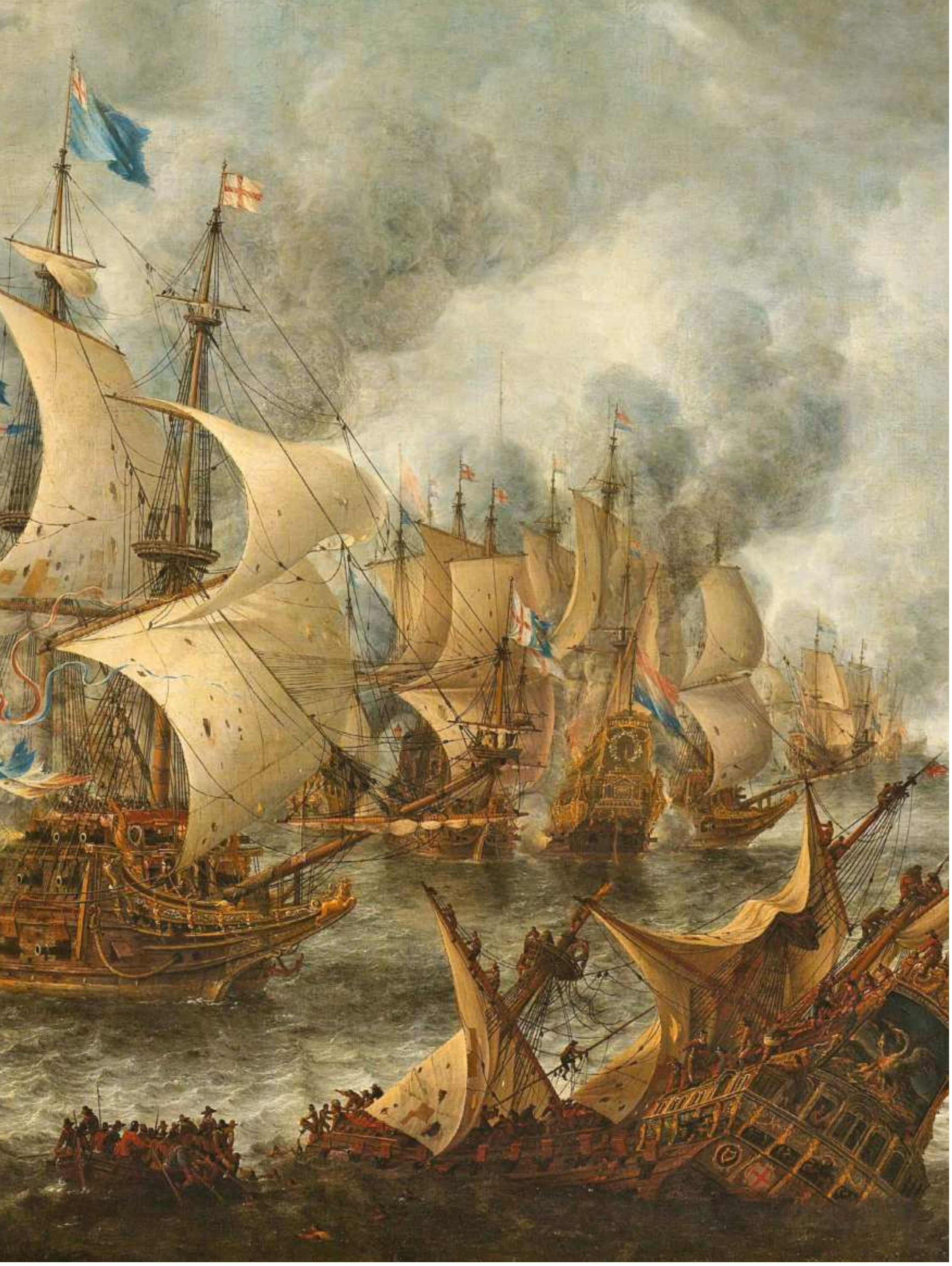
His frustration with the political navel-gazing of the elected members and major-generals was in large measure due to the fact that it hampered the formulation and implementation of policies involving reform at home and expansion abroad.

"Instead of peace and settlement, - instead of mercy and truth being brought together, and righteousness and peace kissing each other, by 'your' reconciling the honest people of these nations, and settling the woeful distempers that are amongst us; …weeds and nettles, briers and thorns have thriven under your shadow! Dissettlement and division, discontent and dissatisfaction; together with real dangers to the whole, - have been more multiplied within these five months of your sitting, than in some years before! Foundations have also been laid for the future renewing of the troubles of these nations by all the enemies of them abroad and at home," he said. Thus Cromwell harangued the first Protectorate parliament when he dissolved it in January 1655.

What, then, had the Lord Protector been hoping to achieve and what did he actually accomplish during his term of office, despite the distractions of constitutional crises? His principles of government were rooted in his Puritan faith — that's enough to damn him in the eyes of many critics as "narrow-minded", "intolerant", "harsh" and "hypocritical".

If we are to arrive at a balanced view, we need to understand two facts: that his religious beliefs were

"Cromwell continued to enjoy the powers of a king without the stigma of monarchy"



based on the highest Christian moral standards and he believed they should be applied in public life, and that his experience of high office led him to temper what was desirable with what was possible and to realise that government is less about black and white and more about shades of grey.

In domestic affairs, he was the first leader to preside over a united commonwealth of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales – something not achieved again until 1801. His regime was more tolerant than those that preceded and followed it. Apart from Catholics and Protestant extremists, nobody was barred from office on grounds of religion and there was greater freedom of worship than prevailed under the Laudian regime or that of Charles II's Cavalier parliament. He also re-admitted Jews to England for the first time since 1290.

The firm, often harsh, rule of the major-generals went a long way towards expelling corruption and inefficiency from the law courts and local government. Furthermore, he abolished the death penalty for several crimes. Promotion to high military and civil office was open to men of talent and not dependent on wealth or accident of birth under his leadership.

In foreign affairs, Cromwell promoted a new assertiveness based on the strength of the Commonwealth's navy. Victory in the first Anglo-Dutch War opened northern waters to England's mercantile marine and the Protector then formulated his 'Western Design' of attacking Spain's American colonies, the primary source of its wealth. This reversal of Stuart policy resulted in the conquest of Jamaica and the inauguration of Britain's imperial expansion.

Cromwell was a man with strong principles and a capacity to think outside the box. Given time he might have achieved much more, but the republican experiment effectively came to an end with his sudden death in September 1658.

The world turned upside down

England became a breeding ground for religious dissention

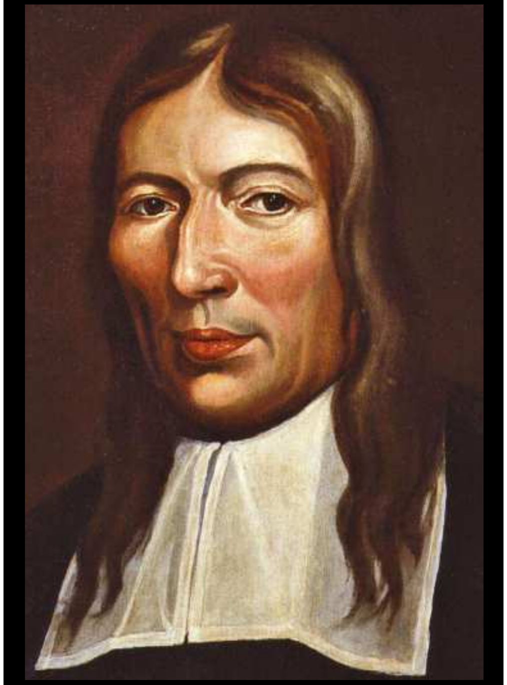
The interregnum brought about political, religious and social changes that the returning Stuart monarchy were unable to reverse. The overthrow of authoritarianism in Church and State left individuals free to decide what they believed based on conscience and the Bible while pamphlets and newspapers – 722 in 1645 – advocating every manner of radical doctrine cascaded from the presses.

Sects, groups and parties of men emerged, hoping to grab the national tiller and steer the country in the direction of their choosing, most of them enjoying freedom of expression. There were more than 20 organised and readily definable dissenting groups, including Quakers, who were dismissed as blasphemous by most mainline Protestants, and Levellers, who aimed to minimise social divisions by such means as drastically widening the franchise.

Diggers went even further, espousing agrarian reform by revolution and violence where necessary, while Fifth Monarchists proclaimed the imminent end of the world and the rule of the 'saints' (themselves) and sought to reform the political structure in preparation for the second coming of Christ.

Ranters, the most extreme members of the radical fringe, were essentially libertarians, claiming to have reached a state of sinless perfection that freed them from conventional moral restraints. Muggletonians, meanwhile, were an offshoot from the Ranters and adopted a plague-on-all-your-houses attitude to formal religion, rejecting worship and preaching.

This hodgepodge of eccentric ideas and ideals may seem weird but it was symptomatic of a mood of intellectual freedom which profoundly affected British political and religious life.



The Muggletonians, named after Lodowicke Muggleton, were a small Protestant sect that survived until the 20th century

©Alamy, Getty Images

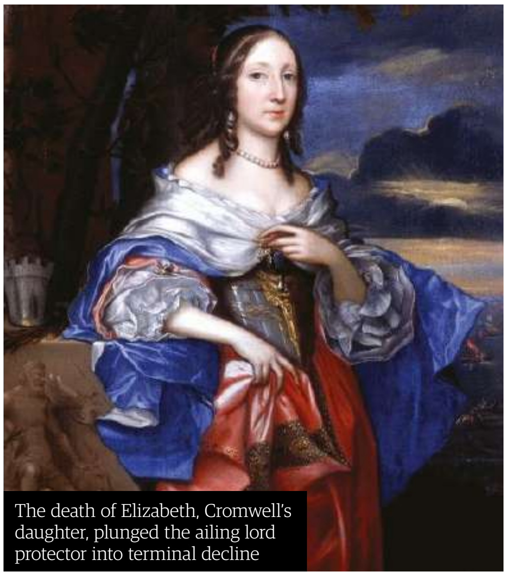
The question of succession

Almost a decade after the execution of Charles I, Oliver Cromwell's health was failing. The fate of the Commonwealth was about to change once more

In September 1658, after almost five years as lord protector of England, Oliver Cromwell's life was nearing its end. For all the controversy, the hard-fought battles and hard-won victories, this final challenge was one that he would not be able to overcome. Soon, the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland would be under the stewardship of another lord protector.

Oliver Cromwell's death was not drawn out and operatic, but so quick, so sudden that some found its rapidity almost suspicious. At the age of 59, the fighting spark had gone out of the weary old soldier, chased away by a lifetime of battles and struggle. More than anything, though, the last few months of Cromwell's life were occupied with the fate of his beloved daughter, Elizabeth Claypole.

Aged just 29, Elizabeth fell ill in June 1658 and by the first week of August, she was dead, most likely a victim of cancer. She was always her father's favourite and her death shattered Cromwell, plunging him into a dark introspection from which he never emerged. At the same time, the malarial fever that had been his constant companion for over two decades returned with a fury, striking him down. Sick, miserable and utterly drained, Cromwell's health declined at a startling rate and the final blow was struck when he contracted a serious kidney infection and pneumonia as the summer of 1658 came to an end. Oliver Cromwell died on 3 September 1658 and was buried amid great ceremony at Westminster Abbey. What, though, of the land he had left behind?


The death of Elizabeth, Cromwell's daughter, plunged the ailing lord protector into terminal decline

©Alamy

It was Cromwell's right and responsibility to name his successor as lord protector, yet no written order of succession could be found. Without it, the government of England was thrown into crisis and Cromwell's powerful secretary of state, Sir John Thurloe, searched in vain for the document. In the years to come, his fruitless search would find Thurloe accused of conspiracy and meddling, as some believed that he had destroyed Cromwell's written nomination when he didn't like the name it proposed.

It was Cromwell's right and responsibility to name his successor as lord protector

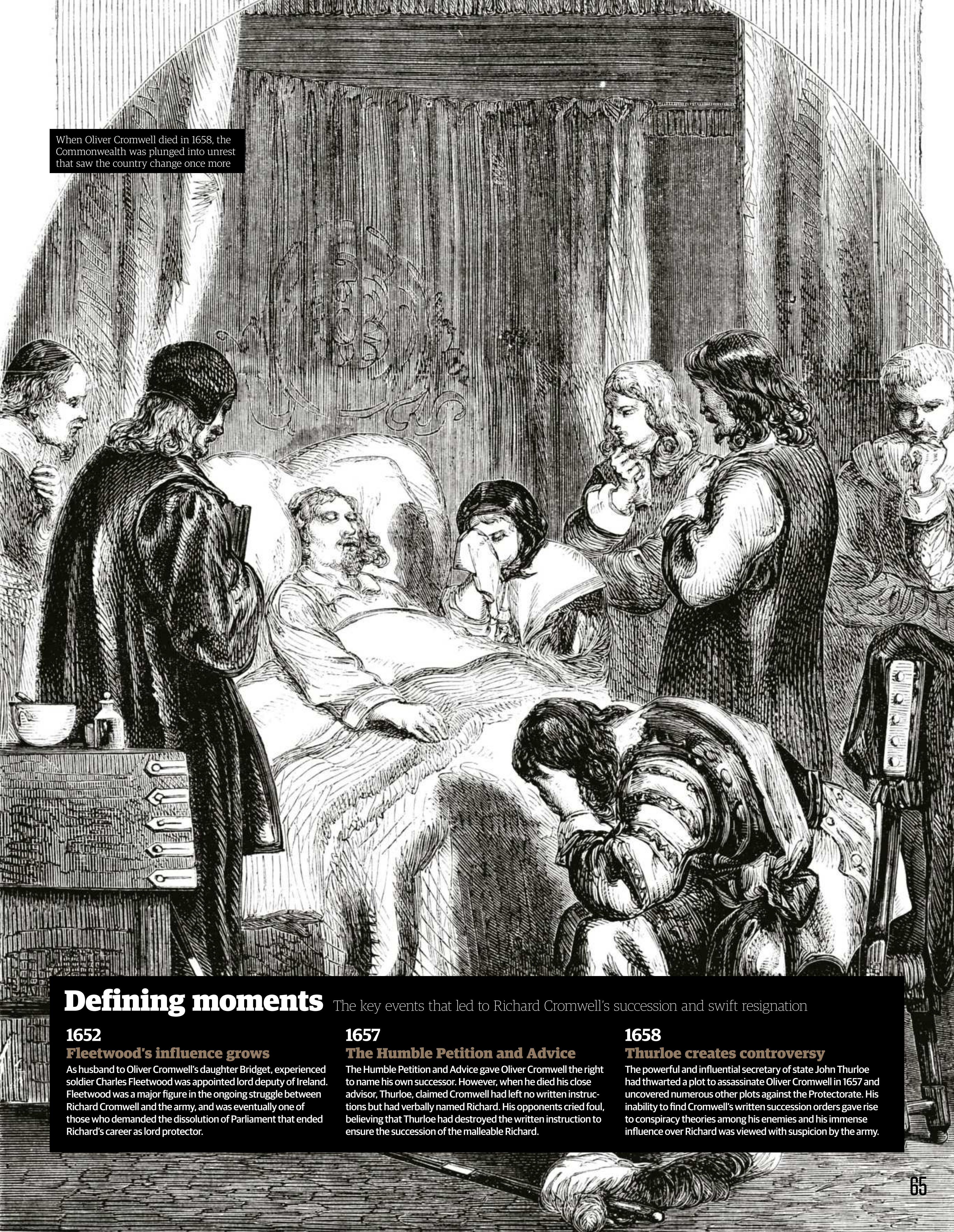
In the absence of written instructions to the contrary and, acting on the word of those who had been with Cromwell immediately before his death, it was agreed that the late lord protector had verbally named his son, Richard, as his successor. On the evening of his father's death, Richard was informed that he was to be the new lord protector. Tellingly, in the speech he gave accepting the role, he also made mention of his own inexperience. These were to be fateful words. In fact, Richard Cromwell's role as lord protector was over in the blink of an eye. Despite public celebration at news of his appointment, Richard had no established support either in the military or Parliament and without that, he couldn't hope to govern. Cromwell had been a dyed-in-the-wool soldier, but his son was no such thing and when Richard was made the commander-in-chief, the New Model Army looked on him with outright suspicion. Did he share his father's righteous zeal, or was he merely doing his duty and filling the gap left by a greater man?

Left to navigate a self-serving landscape of ambition and power plays, Richard trod carefully as he attempted to identify friend and foe. At every turn he found that military issues dominated matters, with power struggles and the battle for influence being fought by many.

As he prepared for the opening of his first and only Parliament in 1659, Richard found that he'd also inherited a debt of almost £2 million. The majority of this sum was owed to the military and he was constantly aware of Charles Fleetwood, Cromwell's son-in-law, hovering on the sidelines. Fleetwood had been commander-in-chief in Ireland and was a favourite of the New Model Army, as well as one of the men some believed Cromwell had really favoured as his successor.

In the end, it was Richard's inability to marry army interests and civil parliament that caused his downfall. Underprepared and unsupported, Richard found his efforts to enforce his rule constantly undermined. Though apparently supportive, those advisors loyal to the military were subtly undermining him at every turn while the army regarded him with suspicion. Seeing budgetary cuts on the horizon, the army turned this suspicion on Parliament, fearing a reduction in its size in order to cut the enormous cost to the nation. When the army petitioned Parliament directly and requested a dissolution, Richard's resistance was short and he soon acquiesced. When the Rump Parliament was recalled, Richard was finally excluded from the business of government permanently; if he was going to strike back, now was the time to do it. Instead, Richard did nothing. He didn't go out with a bang, but faded away, submitting his formal resignation on 25 May 1659.

Less than a year after he assumed the role, the short reign of the second lord protector had staggered to its unremarkable end. Richard Cromwell would never hold office again.



When Oliver Cromwell died in 1658, the Commonwealth was plunged into unrest that saw the country change once more

Defining moments

The key events that led to Richard Cromwell's succession and swift resignation

1652

Fleetwood's influence grows

As husband to Oliver Cromwell's daughter Bridget, experienced soldier Charles Fleetwood was appointed lord deputy of Ireland. Fleetwood was a major figure in the ongoing struggle between Richard Cromwell and the army, and was eventually one of those who demanded the dissolution of Parliament that ended Richard's career as lord protector.

1657

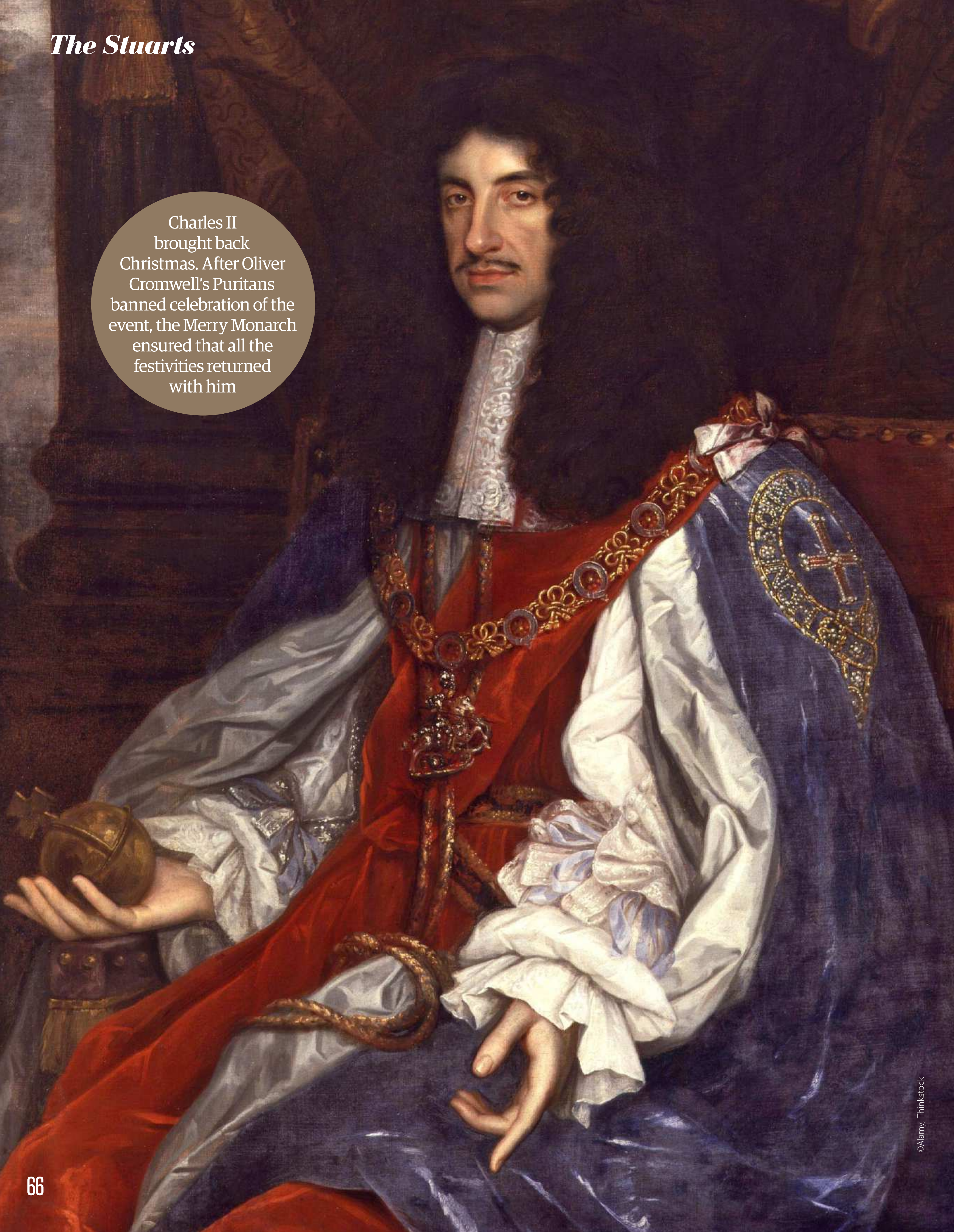
The Humble Petition and Advice

The Humble Petition and Advice gave Oliver Cromwell the right to name his own successor. However, when he died his close advisor, Thurloe, claimed Cromwell had left no written instructions but had verbally named Richard. His opponents cried foul, believing that Thurloe had destroyed the written instruction to ensure the succession of the malleable Richard.

1658

Thurloe creates controversy

The powerful and influential secretary of state John Thurloe had thwarted a plot to assassinate Oliver Cromwell in 1657 and uncovered numerous other plots against the Protectorate. His inability to find Cromwell's written succession orders gave rise to conspiracy theories among his enemies and his immense influence over Richard was viewed with suspicion by the army.



Charles II brought back Christmas. After Oliver Cromwell's Puritans banned celebration of the event, the Merry Monarch ensured that all the festivities returned with him

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INTRODUCING

Charles II

With plots, wars and conspiracies, the reign of the Merry Monarch was not all celebrations and festivities

Timeline

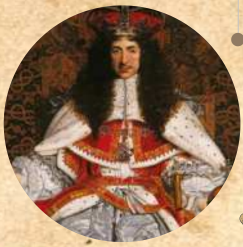
1630

Charles is born
Born to King Charles I and Henrietta Maria, Charles is the second son after the couple gave birth to a boy a year before. However, the firstborn son had died on the day he was born.
29 May 1630

An illegitimate son
Charles' most famous illegitimate son, also called Charles, is born in the Dutch Republic. He becomes close to his father and is later created duke of Monmouth when his father is king.
9 April 1649

King of Scotland
Despite the establishment of the Commonwealth in England, Charles' Scottish coronation ceremony takes place at Scone.
1 January 1651

English invasion fails
After Charles' invasion of England is put down by Cromwell, he goes on the run, notoriously hiding up an oak tree while Parliamentarians search the field below him.
3 September 1651



The monarchy returns
After his exile in mainland Europe, Charles finally returns to England to take his throne, restoring the English monarchy as King Charles II.
29 May 1660

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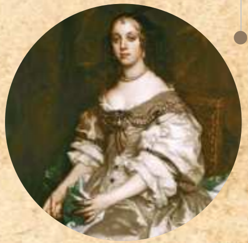
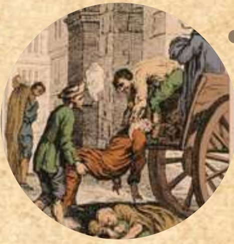


The man of many mistresses
Charles marries Catherine of Braganza, a member of the most senior noble house in Portugal. The union is a political one and, despite repeated miscarriages, no heirs are produced. Charles instead produces a small army of illegitimate children with his mistresses.
21 May 1662

New territories
The Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam in the New World is surrendered to the British. It is later renamed New York after the Dutch leave.
5 September 1664



Bring out your dead
Bubonic plague breaks out in London and spreads fast, claiming the lives of over a quarter of the city's population. Charles and his court flee the city and followed by many other merchants and professionals, leaving many sick and poor in the capital alone.
1665-66

TURN TO PAGE 74

The Anglo-Dutch Wars
The most enduring conflict during Charles' reign is the Anglo-Dutch Wars. The second breaks out in 1665 and the third in 1672 and sees the two nations struggle for the control of crucial trade routes, with England determined to end the Dutch domination of world trade. However, both wars end in Dutch victory and England suffers great financial losses.
1665-74

Old London burns
A great fire sweeps through central London. The damage is widespread and devastating, destroying 80 per cent of the city and it is finally extinguished two days later. Despite the damage, the fire helps stop the plague as it kills most of the disease-carrying rats.
2-5 September 1666

TURN TO PAGE 78

The Treaty of Dover
Charles, struggling to rebuild London, signs a secret treaty with Louis XIV of France, agreeing to convert himself to Catholicism and support France in their war against the Dutch in order to receive £230,000 a year. Although the conversion did not occur, the Third Anglo-Dutch War was a direct result of the treaty.
1670

The Declaration of Indulgence
Charles enacts the Declaration of Indulgence in an attempt to give religious freedom to Catholics. It is unpopular and withdrawn the next year.
15 March 1672

The Popish Plot
A disgraced clergyman claims there is Catholic plot to assassinate Charles II. The claims spark panic and mass arrests, and although it is ultimately revealed to be fake, it spurs anti-Catholic sentiment.
September 1678

Habeas Corpus
The Habeas Corpus Act is passed by Parliament, making it illegal to imprison someone without trial. Many subsequent Habeas Corpus acts will follow, but this is regarded as the most important in English history.
27 May 1679

A lone king
Always eager to assert his God-given authority, and also tiring of the Catholic and Protestant infighting and plots, Charles dissolves Parliament. He will continue to rule alone for his remaining years.
5 December 1679

The Rye House Plot
Out of fear that Charles' openly Catholic brother, James, will take the crown, there is a plot to kill both of them before installing the duke of Monmouth on the throne. The plot is foiled and Charles uses it as an excuse to dispose of several of his enemies, convicting them of treason and beheading them.
1683

1685

End of merriment
Aged 54, Charles suffers a sudden apoplectic fit and dies four days later. On his deathbed he converts to Catholicism and pleads with his brother to look after his mistress, Nealy. With his only children being illegitimate, Charles is succeeded by his younger brother, who becomes James II.
6 February 1685

The return of the Stuart king

Charles Stuart's return ushered in a golden era of licentiousness, inspired by the European culture he experienced on the continent during his exile

In May 1659, after less than a year in office, Richard Cromwell resigned from the position of Lord Protector after failing to illicit the confidence of Parliament and was unable to starve off what was effectively a bloodless military coup. Parliament paid off his debts and offered him a pension before he was allowed to retire with no retribution. But with no immediate successor and the political regime of the past decade extremely unpopular, Charles Stuart, the exiled son of the hated King Charles I, increasingly appeared to be the most appealing choice.

After a series of successful negotiations to ensure that Charles would not abuse his power like his father – who had been executed as an enemy of the people in 1649 – and that he would continue the Protestant religion, the future king issued the Declaration of Breda. This reassured Parliament that those who had bought property during the interregnum would not see it confiscated, that the army would be reincorporated under the crown and that life would generally continue as normal. Having satisfied both of the Houses, Charles was allowed to return to England to take his throne and the interregnum was over.

It was clear that Charles enjoyed the popularity of his people and that both the wider public and Parliament now realised the importance of the institution of monarchy. Having suffered under years of austerity and Puritanism, which had seen Parliament outlaw the theatre and even Christmas, England was ready for a return to the normality that it so dearly missed.

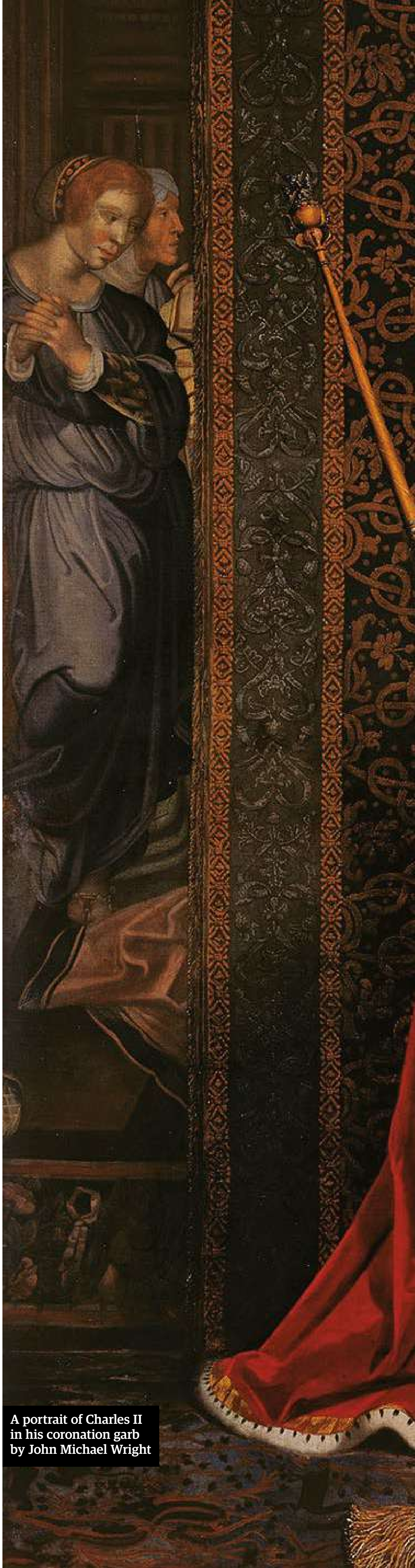
With the Restoration came a new era in which the more licentious sexual mores found on the continent exploded into English cultural life, perhaps inspired by the king himself who became known as the Merry Monarch due to his many mistresses and illegitimate children. His most famous lover was probably Nell Gwyn, an orange seller who later found fame as an actress.

Indeed, the fact that the theatres were re-opened and women were allowed on the stage for the first time – often performing bawdy plays about sexual freedom, laden with innuendoes – was a sign of just how much Charles II's return to the country influenced its society.

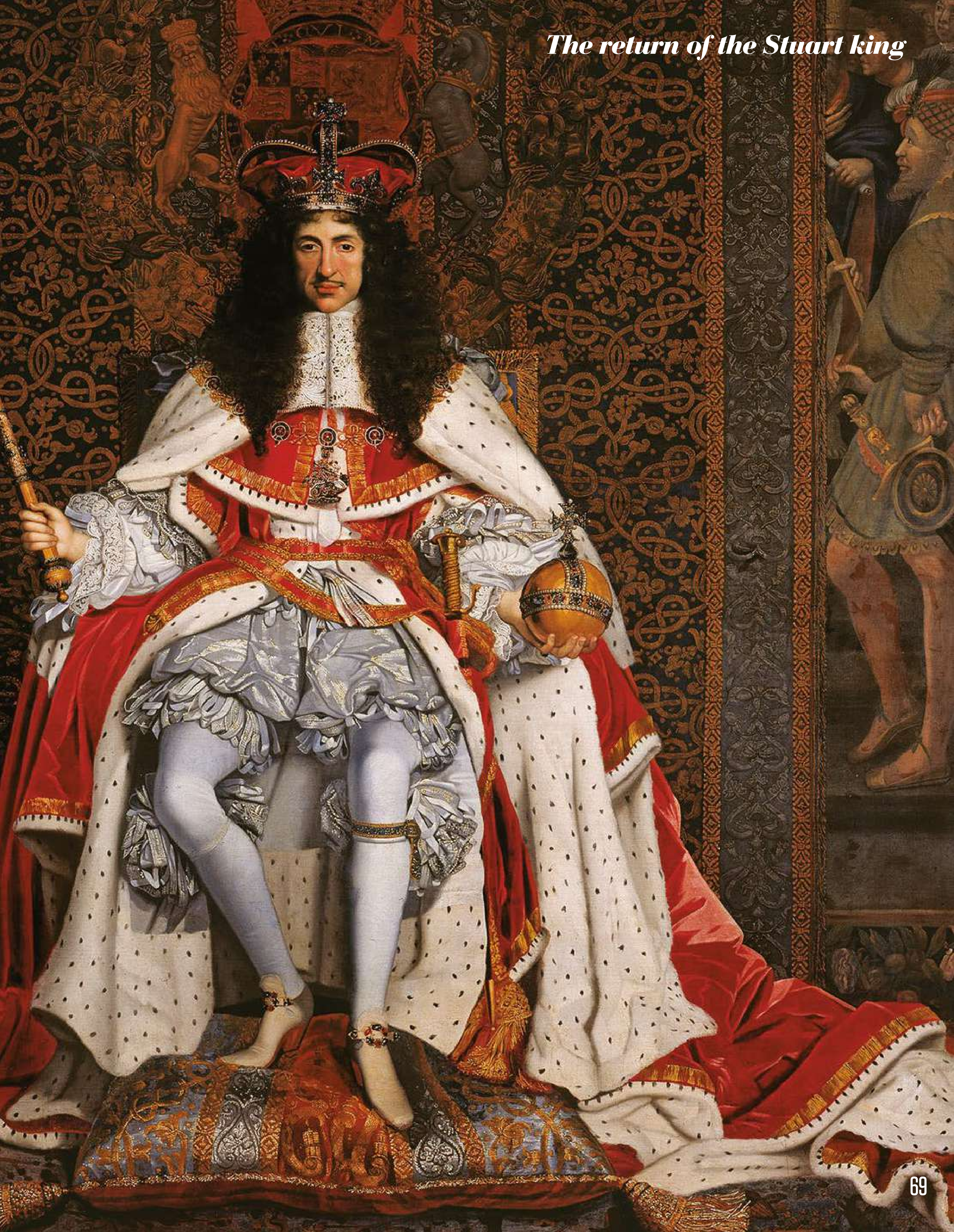
London became an incredible melting pot of culture and commerce, a centre of globalisation to match Antwerp and the wider Netherlands. Charles and the aristocrats who had fled with him had over a decade to reflect and become acquainted with the more liberal European lifestyles that they brought back with them.

However, although it may have seemed like the past had been forgiven and bygones were bygones, the Restoration did bring with it recriminations against those who had taken a direct role in the regicide of Charles I. Not everybody managed to get off scot-free.

Shortly after Charles II's ascension, he passed the Indemnity and Oblivion Act with the approval Parliament. While this granted immunity to those who had played some role in the Civil War, meaning that most of the common folk wouldn't be prosecuted for choosing the wrong side –



A portrait of Charles II in his coronation garb by John Michael Wright



"Charles' younger brother, James, Duke of York, was actually a confirmed member of the Catholic Church"

so long as they hadn't committed murder, piracy, rape or any other serious crimes without Parliament's permission. The politicians that had been specifically involved in the trial and execution of Charles' father, on the other hand, were to be punished, and this included all those who had signed the death warrant.

One of the condemned was John Cook, the solicitor general, who had led the prosecution and concocted the legal argument that Charles I had committed crimes against his people. Widely regarded as one of the forefathers of international law for prosecuting a leader, Cook was ultimately hanged, drawn and quartered.

Parliament also decreed that Oliver Cromwell and some of the other 'co-conspirators' in the execution of Charles I and the establishment of the Commonwealth – namely Henry Ireton, John Bradshaw and Thomas Pride – should suffer a traitor's death. The fact that they were already dead wasn't an issue.

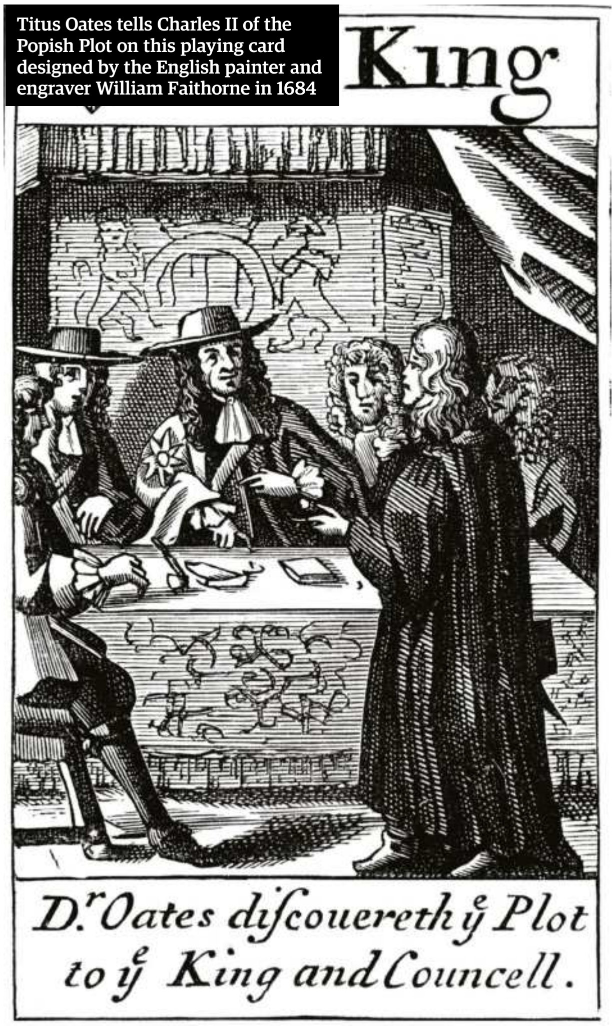
The bodies of the three men were exhumed and on 30 January 1661, the 12th anniversary of the regicide. Their corpses were hung in the village of Tyburn before their heads were severed and their bodies thrown into a pit. Cromwell's head was displayed on a spike outside Westminster Hall – where Charles I had been tried – for nearly 25 years before it was sold on to various people as a trophy. It was only as late as 1960 that it was finally buried under the ante-chapel of Sidney Sussex College at the University of Cambridge.

When Charles II took the English throne, many have argued that he wanted to establish a culture of religious tolerance. Catholics had been persecuted since the establishment of the Elizabethan religious settlement but they had not helped their cause with some high-profile conspiracies aimed at deposing or killing their Protestant monarchs and changing the regime. The ones that must still have lingered in the minds of most were the Babington Plot of 1586 – which had led to the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, after her own involvement was exposed – and the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, which, if it had succeeded, would have seen the entire Protestant political establishment wiped away in a single stroke.

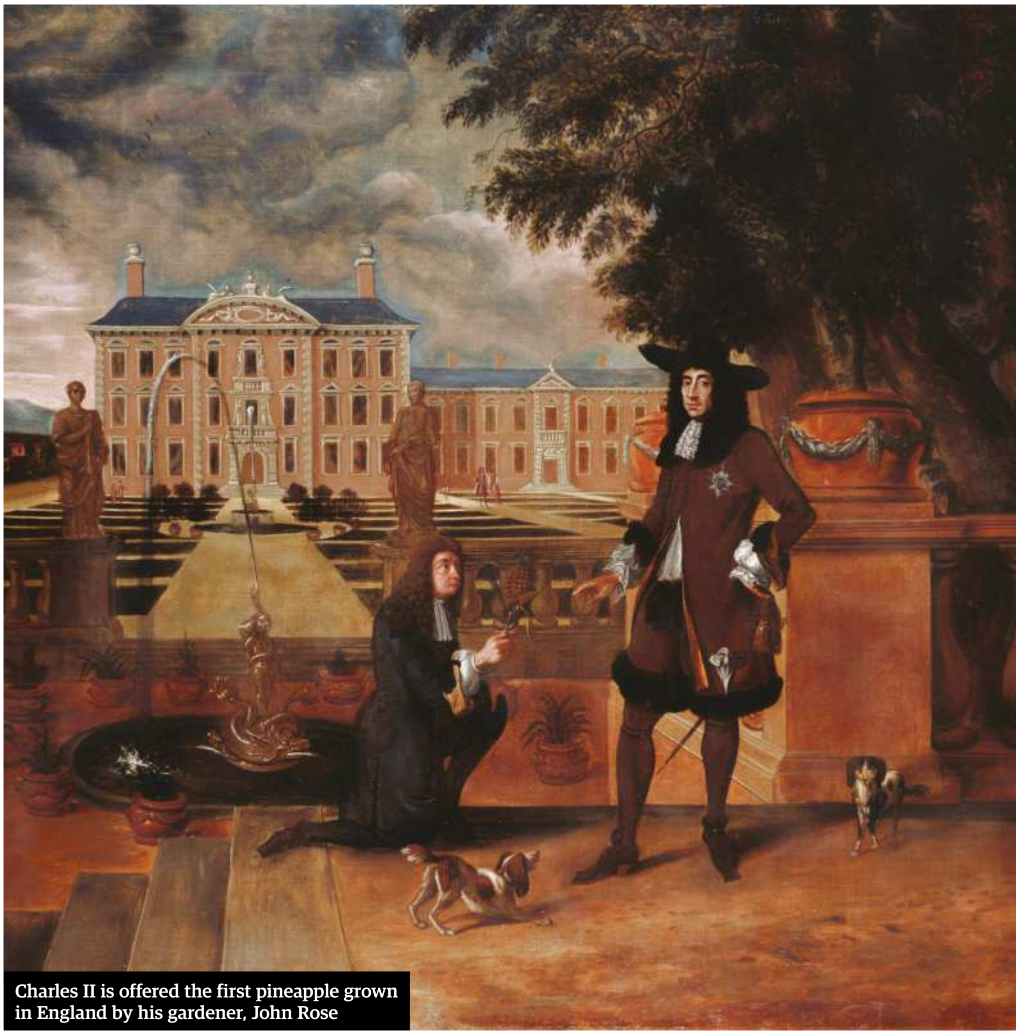
More liberal Anglicans had also been persecuted during the highly conservative Puritan regime that ran under Cromwell, while factions like the Fifth Monarchists – an apocalyptic sect that believed Jesus was about to descend to Earth and begin a 1,000-year reign in the lead-up to the day of judgement – infiltrated the navy and declared the Commonwealth leader a second Moses.

But any thoughts of creating a state where everybody was free – or at least more so than they had been in the past – to practise their religion at will soon went out the window. Parliament became suspicious that Charles might try to change the national religion back to Roman Catholicism due to fact that he and aristocracy had spent much of their exile in France under the Catholic absolutist Louis XIV and had absorbed many of the European Catholic ideals. Furthermore, Charles married Catherine of Braganza, the Catholic daughter of the king of Portugal and the Algarves, in 1662.

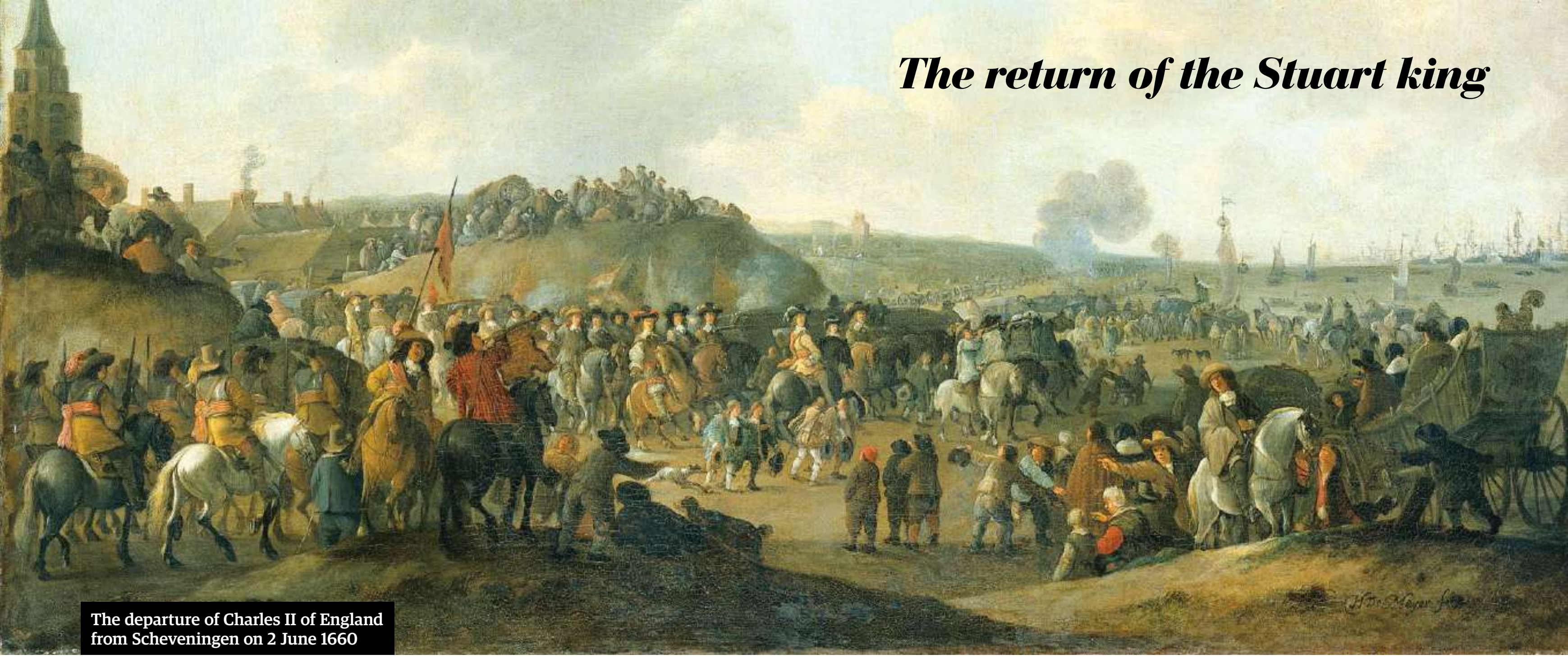
This suspicion against Catholics was heightened when it became public knowledge that Charles' younger brother, James, Duke of York, was actually


King
Dr Oates discouereth ye Plot to ye King and Councell.

Titus Oates tells Charles II of the Popish Plot on this playing card designed by the English painter and engraver William Faithorne in 1684



Charles II is offered the first pineapple grown in England by his gardener, John Rose



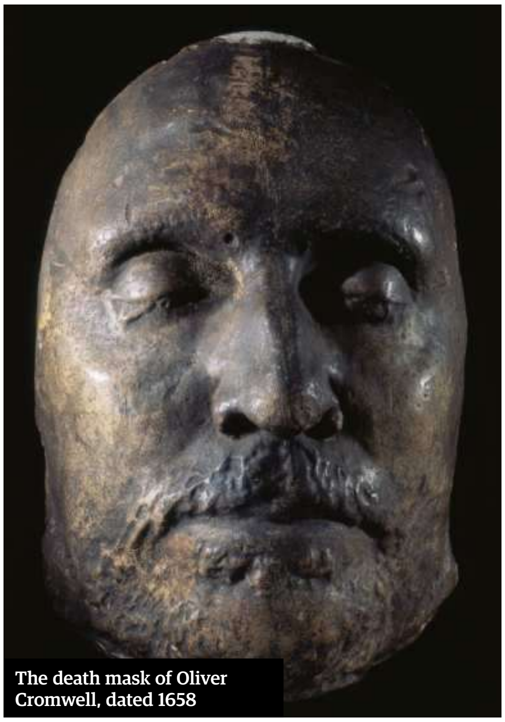
The departure of Charles II of England from Scheveningen on 2 June 1660

a confirmed member of the Catholic Church. He was forced to resign from his position as lord high admiral when he refused to swear allegiance to the Church of England.

As it increasingly became apparent that Charles was not going to have any legitimate children, it seemed certain that James would one day become king. Fears began to set in about what type of leader he would be and whether he would try to change the national religion.

At this point, Parliament was controlled by the Whigs, who believed in a more constitutional monarchy and wanted to see James excluded from the line of succession. On the other side were the Tories – those who believed James should be given a chance, as was his divine right. On a number of occasions, the Whigs tried to bring forward bills to bar him from the throne – the only reason they failed is because Charles dissolved parliament.

These fears reached their peak between 1678 and 1681 during a crisis known as the Popish Plot.

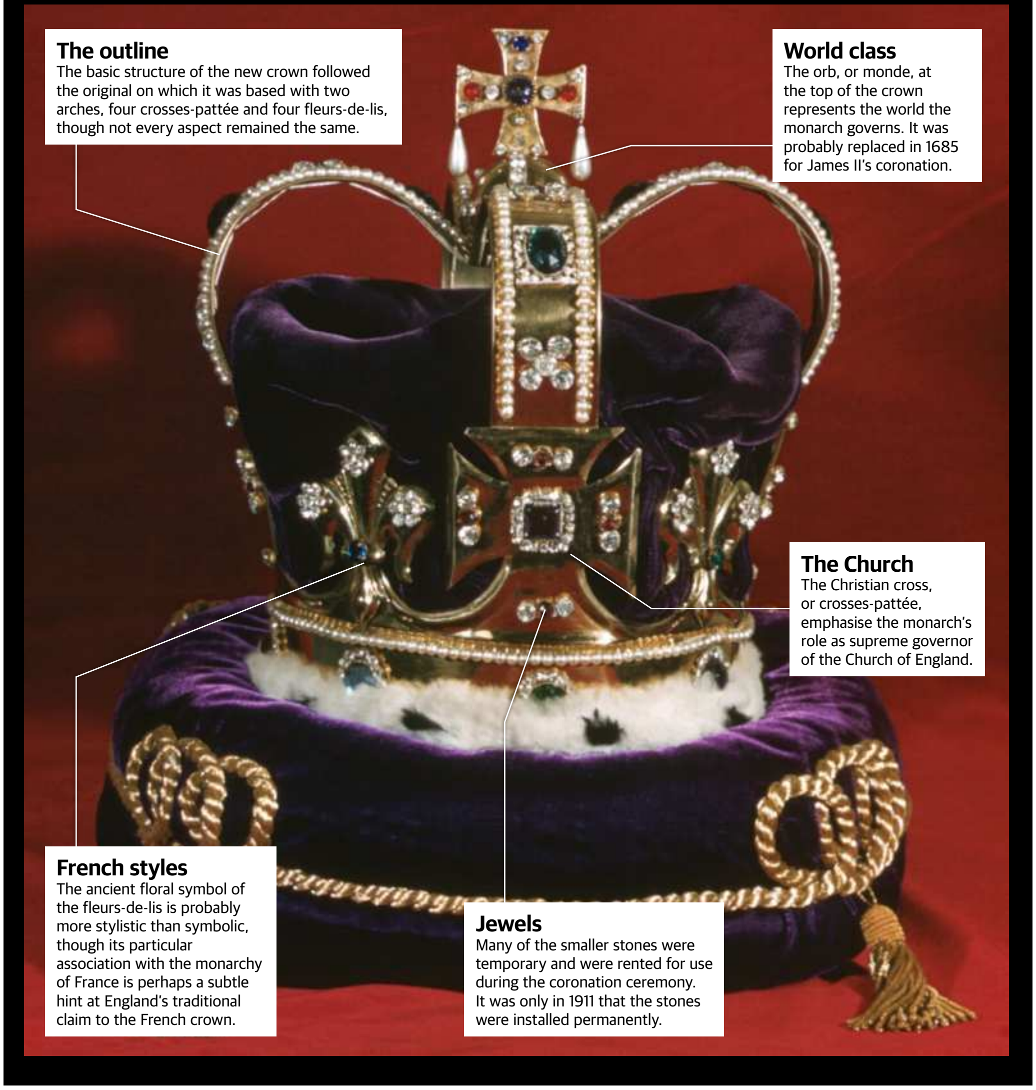


The death mask of Oliver Cromwell, dated 1658

Saint Edward's Crown

Uncover the most sacred object of the coronation regalia, made specifically for Charles II

When Charles I was executed, the original crown jewels, including the original Saint Edward's Crown, which many believed dated back to the time of Edward the Confessor, were melted down or sold off. All that remained was the coronation spoon. So in 1660, as the newly declared Charles II prepared for his English coronation the following year, the job of constructing a new headpiece that would resemble its Medieval predecessor as much as possible was down to the crown jeweller, Robert Viner.



The outline
The basic structure of the new crown followed the original on which it was based with two arches, four crosses-pattée and four fleurs-de-lis, though not every aspect remained the same.

World class
The orb, or monde, at the top of the crown represents the world the monarch governs. It was probably replaced in 1685 for James II's coronation.

The Church
The Christian cross, or crosses-pattée, emphasise the monarch's role as supreme governor of the Church of England.

French styles
The ancient floral symbol of the fleurs-de-lis is probably more stylistic than symbolic, though its particular association with the monarchy of France is perhaps a subtle hint at England's traditional claim to the French crown.

Jewels
Many of the smaller stones were temporary and were rented for use during the coronation ceremony. It was only in 1911 that the stones were installed permanently.

A compulsive liar, fantasist, ex-Anglican clergyman and all-round bad egg called Titus Oates helped spread false rumours that James and his courtiers were involved in a conspiracy to murder Charles and re-establish a Catholic state. Aided by fellow clergyman Israel Tonge, the plot sparked hysteria across the nation as the gossip gathered momentum through playing cards, pamphlets and the newly established coffeehouse culture.

Anyone who didn't believe in the plot found themselves denounced – like Sir Philip Lloyd, who was overheard expressing doubts in the Rainbow Coffeehouse on Fleet Street. When Lloyd rebuffed that he had denied the plot, Oates got four other coffee drinkers to testify against him.

Oates, a relative nobody who had left Cambridge without a degree and had once been in terrible poverty, was rewarded with appearances before Parliament and was the star witness in a series of show trials where questionable evidence was simply accepted with little investigation. He was further compensated with a pension of £40 a month and state apartments at Whitehall.

All in all, Oates was responsible for the death of 35 men before his scheme was finally exposed. He was kicked out of his lush suite and arrested in an Amsterdam coffeehouse. After being convicted of perjury and sentenced to imprisonment for life, he was publicly pelted with eggs while wearing a sign that read: "Titus Oates convicted upon full evidence of two horrid perjuries".

> "There was a dark, violent and uneasy culture that lay behind the jolly and frivolous aspects of Restoration England"

The fact that the Popish Plot was allowed to succeed for so long shows that there was a dark, violent and uneasy culture that lay behind the jolly and frivolous aspects of Restoration England. Civil society and political debate seemed to teeter on the cusp of breaking down once again, just as they had done in 1642.

Charles II's fate was slightly different in Scotland. Unlike England, where a republic was declared immediately following Charles I's execution, the future Charles II had sufficient military and political backing north of the border to have himself declared king of the Scots in 1650. But it wasn't without difficulty.

Charles, a clandestine Catholic, had to agree to accept the covenants of the Church of Scotland – the Kirk – which he did, albeit begrudgingly. He had considered an invasion with the assistance of Catholics in Ireland for a while but soon dispensed with this idea – shortly after Cromwell mounted an invasion of Scotland with an army.

He was crowned at Scone on 1 January 1651 but was forced to defend his crown as Cromwell's forces began their invasion soon after. He was defeated at the Battle of Worcester in September and, so the legend goes, famously had to hide up an oak tree to avoid being captured before he could make his escape to the continent.

After his restoration, Scotland was once again neglected, as it had been under his father and grandfather before him. Tariffs were reintroduced on the Scottish border and the Merry Monarch appointed a series of commissioners, which included his much-maligned brother, the duke of York, to run the country on his behalf without consulting the Scottish Parliament.

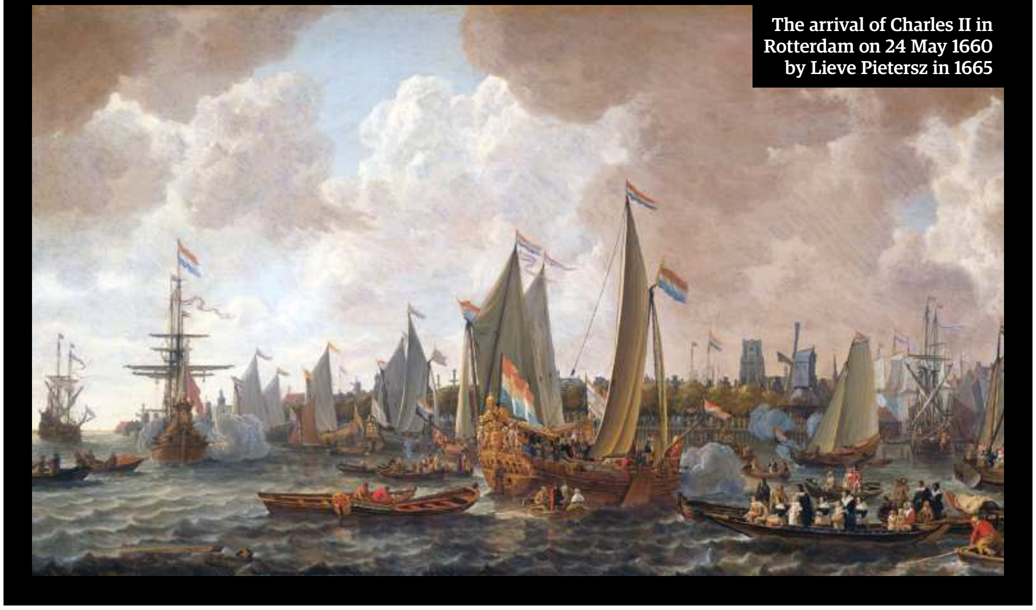
The King returns to his land

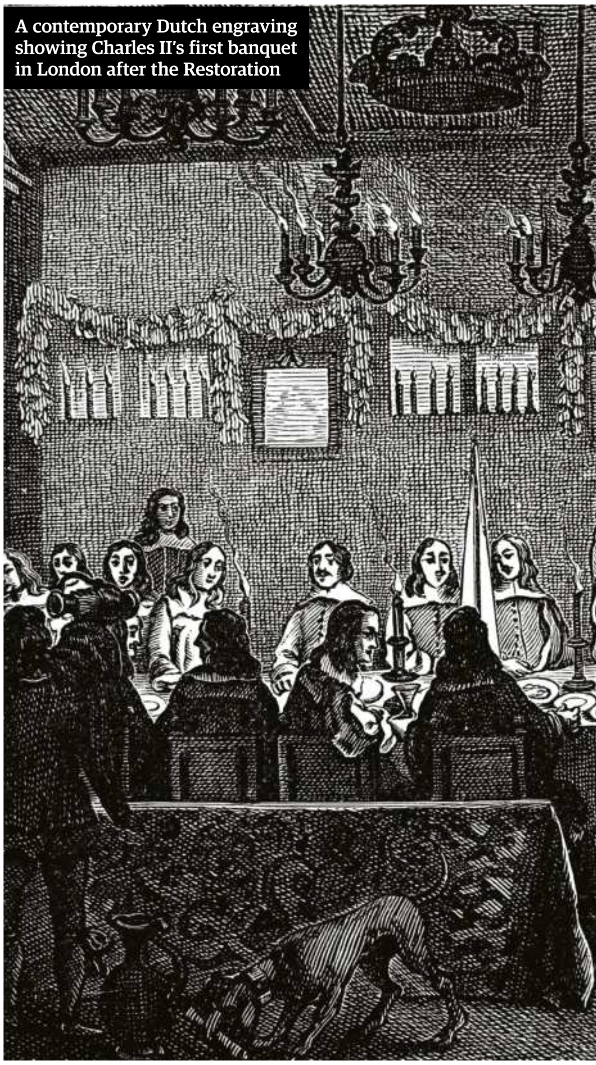
Charles II was welcomed back to the throne with great fanfare

On 23 May 1660, Charles II set sail for England from the Hague in the Dutch Republic on a ship that had been sent over by the English Parliament – a symbolic gesture that had seemed unthinkable just a few years before. On the shores of Dover two days later, there were cheering crowds as he landed. He made his way to Blackheath, near Greenwich, on 29 May – his 30th birthday – and 100,000 men were waiting to greet him.

Later, in his opening address to the House of Lords, he said, "I am so disordered by my journey, and with the noise still sounding in my ears (which I confess was pleasing to me, because it expressed the affections of my People) as I am unfit, at the represent, to such a reply as I desire; yet thus much I shall say unto you. That I take no greater satisfaction to my self in this my change, than that I find my heart really set to enamour by all means for the restoring of this Nation to their freedom and happiness; and I hope, by the advice of my parliament, to effect it."

In the evening he hosted a banquet at the Banqueting House in the now-lost Palace of Whitehall, where his father had been executed 11 years previously. To an outsider, it must almost have seemed as if nothing had changed in that time.

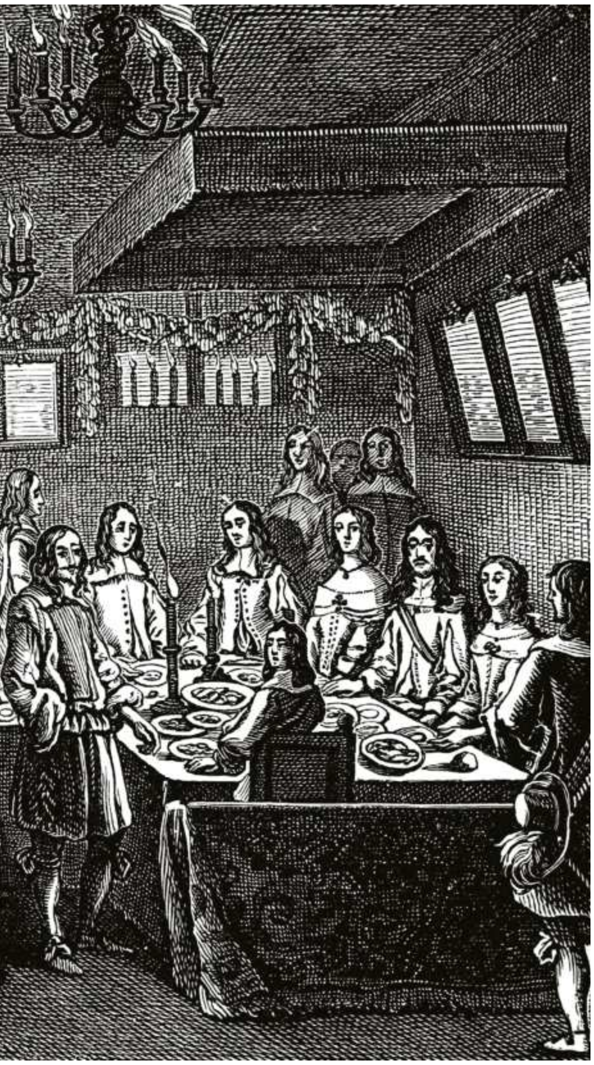

The arrival of Charles II in Rotterdam on 24 May 1660 by Lieve Pietersz in 1665

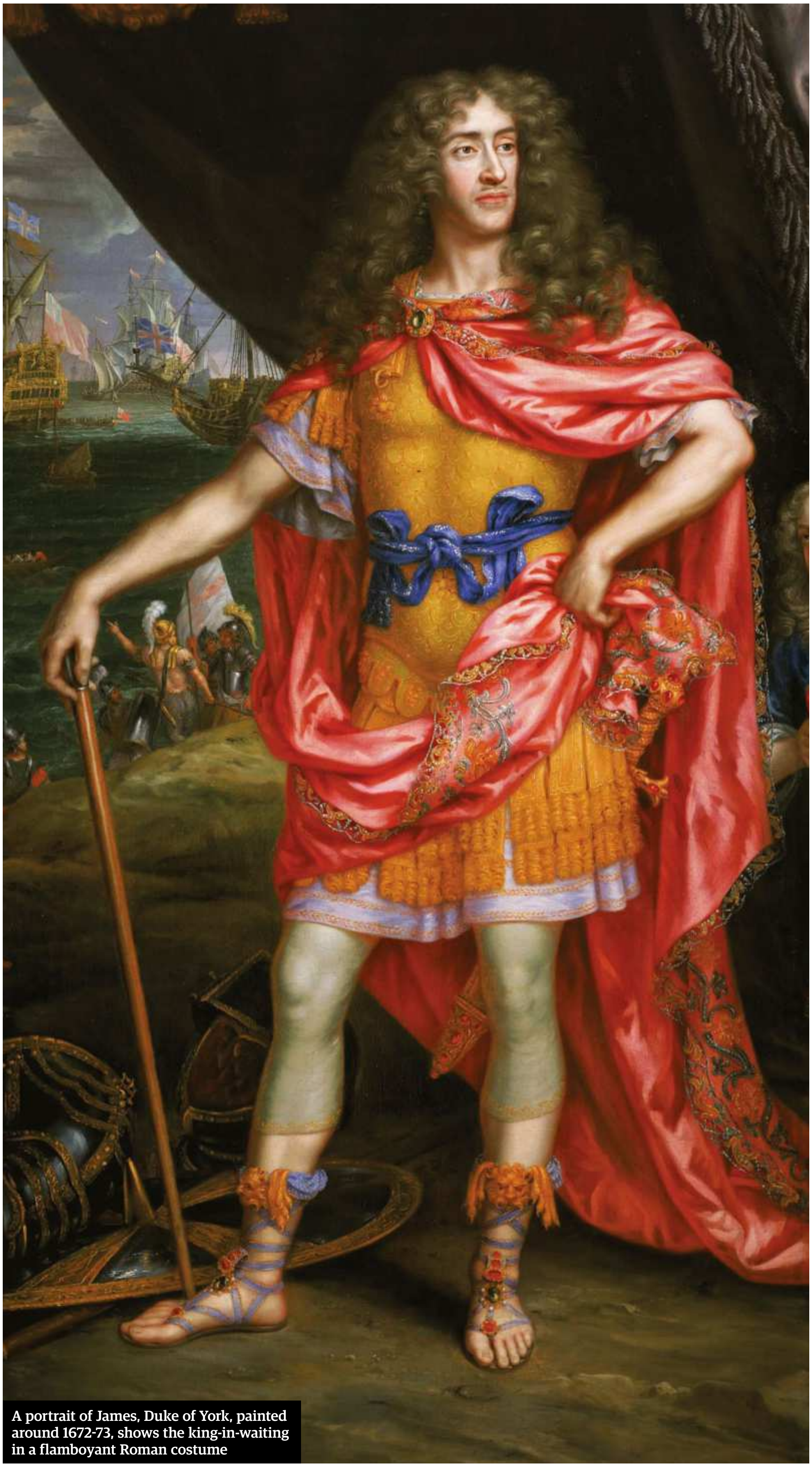

A contemporary Dutch engraving showing Charles II's first banquet in London after the Restoration

Charles insisted on being able to make war and peace, dismiss Parliament and appoint his own ministers by himself. His Scottish MPs were also highly inexperienced and were, to some extent, mere puppets, prepared to rubber stamp the decisions of both Charles and the commissioners without opposition. As a result, the Scottish Restoration is often characterised as being a time of economic depression and increasing political frustration with little hint of the golden era that so gripped England.

Charles and his ministers were allowed to get away with this arguably dictatorial method of government because nobody wanted to see a return to the political upset of the 1640s and 50s. The fear of another civil war or even a bloody war with England cannot be overstated.

Perhaps the Glorious Revolution, which took place just three years after Charles II's death, reveals that the classical images of the Restoration as a new and harmonious epoch in which England had left the divisions of the civil war far behind were extremely misleading. Bubbling away under the surface, away from the bawdy theatre stages and busy coffeehouses, was a country still split and ruled by leaders equally as unsuitable for their roles as Charles I and Richard Cromwell.





A portrait of James, Duke of York, painted around 1672-73, shows the king-in-waiting in a flamboyant Roman costume

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The Black Death

How the last outbreak of plague in England turned the capital into a ghost town

During the cold winter of 1664, a bright comet was seen tearing across the black night sky by the people of London. Rather than marvelling at this natural phenomenon, the inhabitants were fearful. Strange lights in the night sky could only be bad omens of things to come. Such superstitions and beliefs were common in the 17th century and usually amounted to nothing, but on this rare occasion, the people were right – evil was coming.

When one thinks of the outbreaks of plague that terrorised Europe across the Middle Ages and beyond, it is usually in massive epidemics that wipe out entire populations and then vanish out of site, but this is simply not true. In fact, the plague never really left Europe, or even England, at all. From its first appearance in 1347, it was simply a hazardous part of daily life for centuries. Bills of mortuary were first regularly published in 1603, and between then and 1665 there were only four years without any recorded cases of pestilence. In 1563 alone, 1,000 people were said to be dying each week from the disease, and there was an outbreak so devastating in 1625 that it was known as the 'Great Plague' until it was eclipsed by the dark days of 1665.

Commonly referred to as the 'Black Death', this new outbreak turned the victim's skin black in patches with hideous inflamed buboes sprouting up around the groin. This was accompanied by vomiting, a swollen tongue and splitting headaches. The Black Death killed slowly and it killed painfully, and there was no known cure – doctors had no real idea how to treat it as they did not know the source. They blamed many different things such as the weather, livestock, moles and frogs, but the true origin, not discovered until 1894, was fleas that lived on rats, and London was a breeding ground for the disease-carrying rodents.

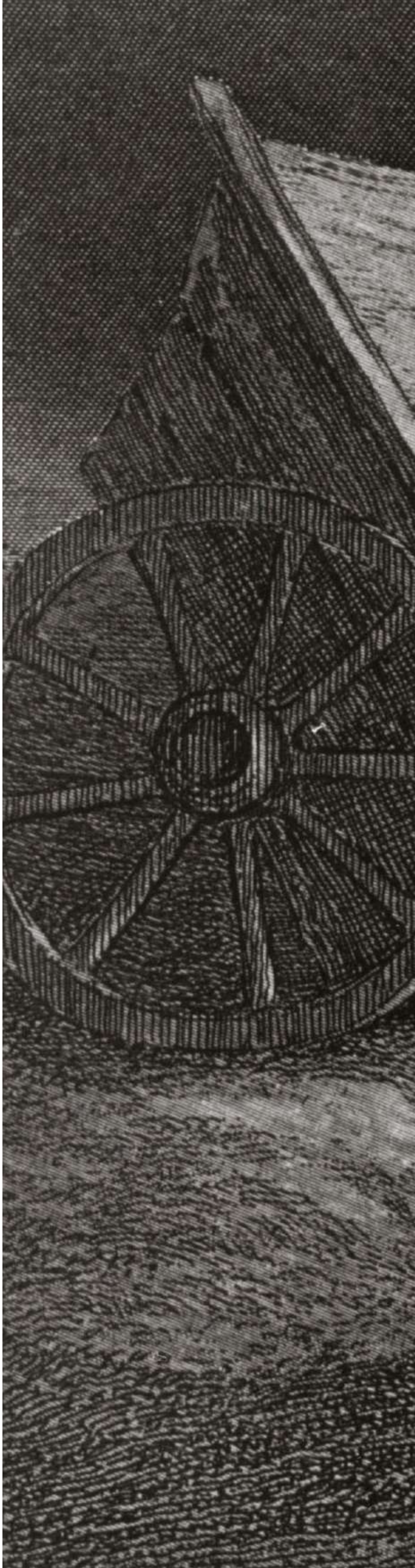
The poorest parts of London were horrendously overcrowded and sanitation was nonexistent. Sewage slopped down the streets and the ground was covered with animal dung. Great stinking piles of the mess were heaped outside the city walls where it decomposed in the summer sun. The stench of rotting waste was so overpowering that people had to hold handkerchiefs to their noses to blot out the smell.

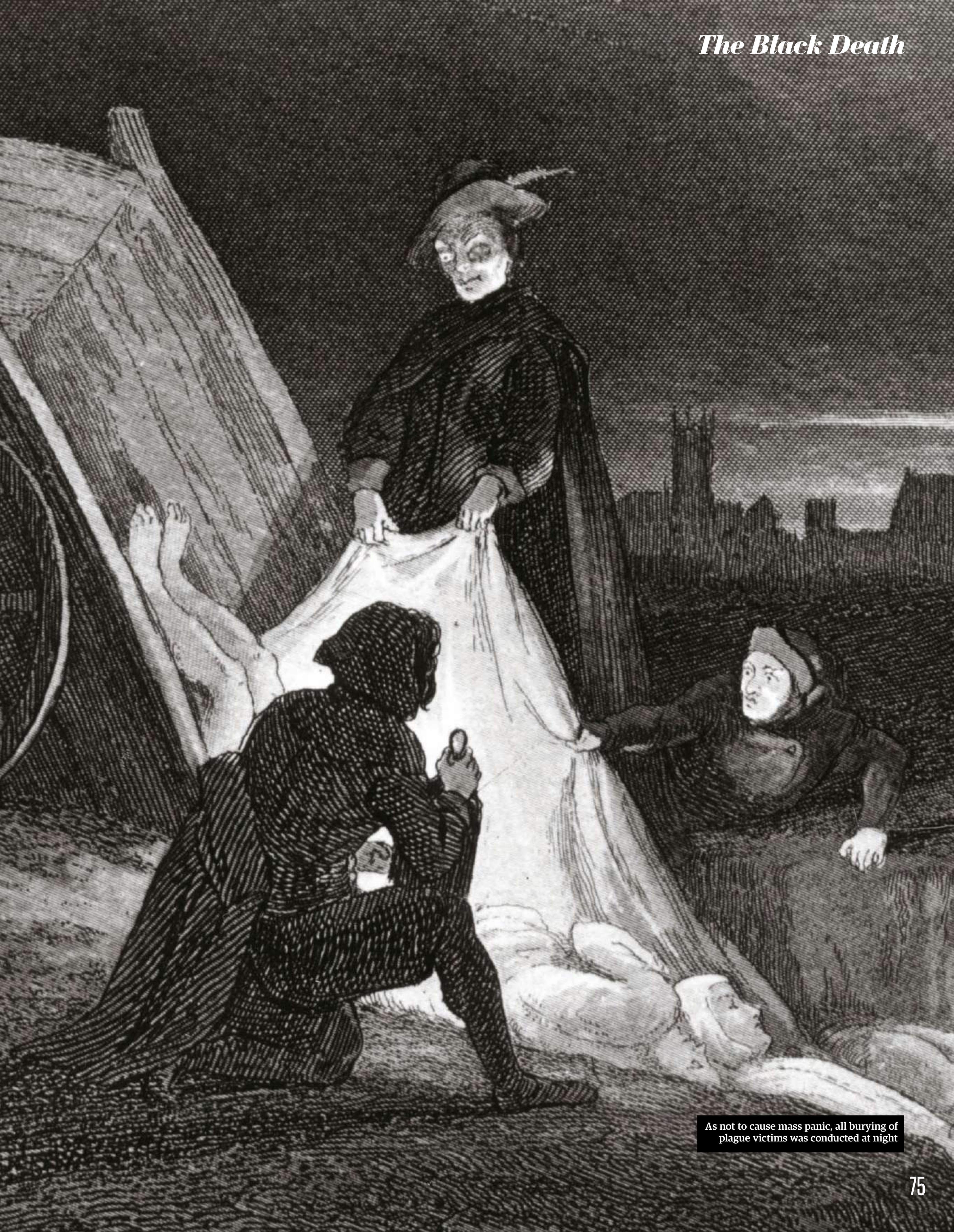
Although some wealthier tenants had the luxury of carriages and sedan chairs, the poor walked through the mud and filth while being drenched with waste thrown into the street. Just outside the city walls was no better, with previously lavish homes now overcrowded by tradesmen and immigrants, turning the rich, extravagant houses into rat-infested slums. With the living conditions growing steadily worse, it was not a question of if another plague epidemic would spread, but when.

This particular strand of plague was believed to have arrived in London on Dutch trading ships loaded with infested cotton and the docks were supposedly the first area to succumb to the pestilence. Its spread was inevitable as the dock workers were crowded together in stinking, cramped buildings. The disease was not immediately widespread but there was a noted increase in plague deaths over the next year.

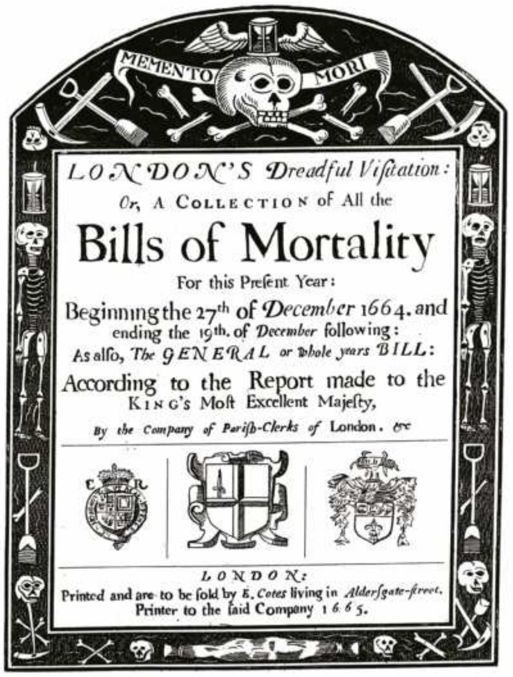
Although the numbers weren't that high, London had seen what plague could do to its population and so the Privy Council aimed to act fast by introducing household quarantines and shutting up any homes that housed suspected cases of the disease. However, as you might expect, the people were not pleased by these extreme measures and violent rioting broke out when the first house was sealed, which led to the release of its inhabitants. Pest houses also sprang up, where the sick could be isolated until they recovered or, more likely, succumbed to their illness.

Despite the council's efforts, the plague spread as the weather grew warmer, with more deaths occurring across the city. Fearing the outbreak could get worse, ale houses were closed and strict





As not to cause mass panic, all burying of plague victims was conducted at night


MEMENTO MORI

LONDON'S Dreadful Viſitation:
Or, A COLLECTION of All the
Bills of Mortality
For this Preſent Year:
Beginning the 27th of *December* 1664. and
ending the 19th. of *December* following:
As alſo, *The GENERAL or whole years BILL:*
According to the Report made to the
KING's Moſt Excellent Majeſty,
By the Company of Pariſh-Clerks of London. &c

LONDON:
Printed and are to be ſold by *E. Cotes* living in *Alderſgate-ſtreet*.
Printer to the ſaid Company 1665.

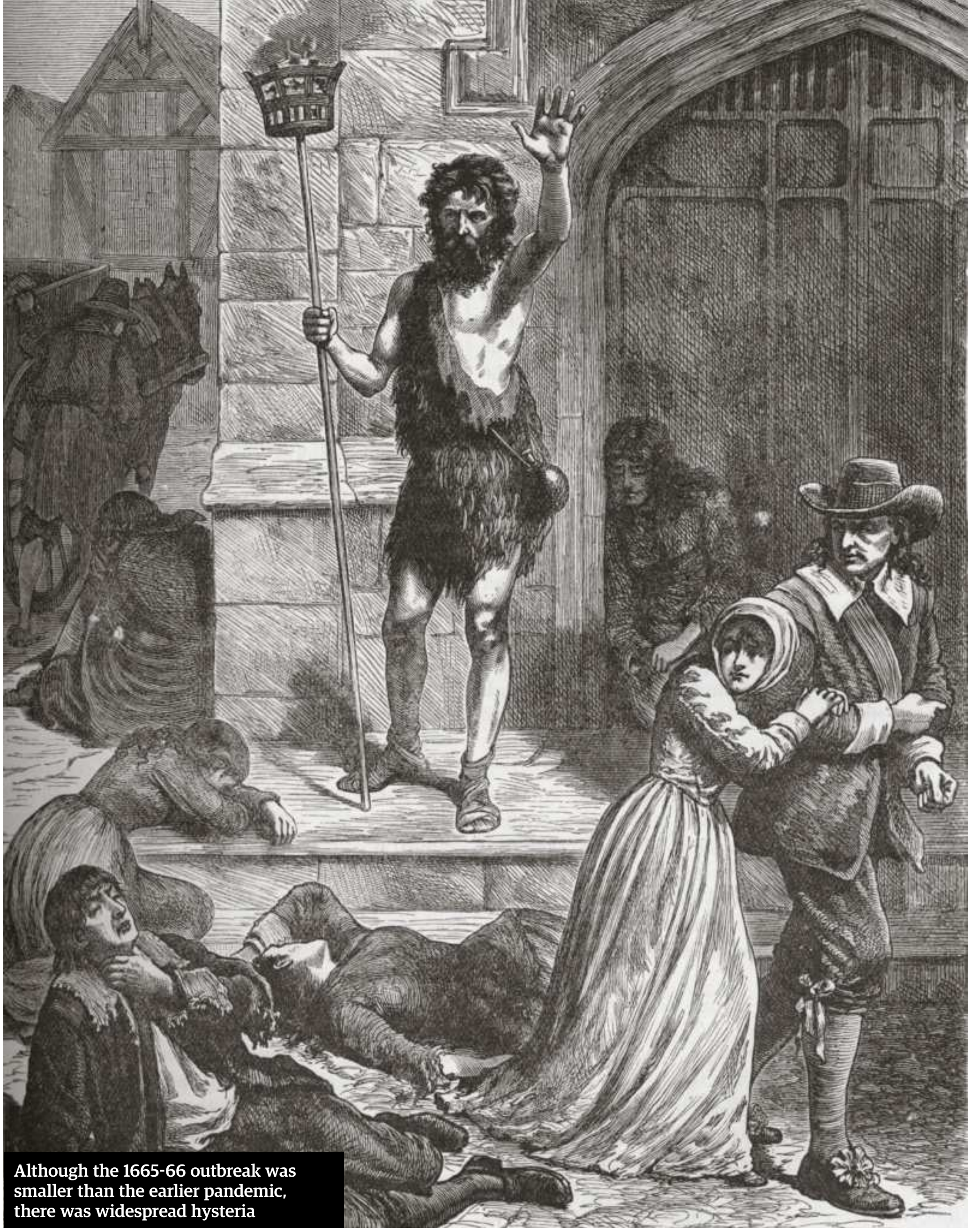
rules imposed on the number of people allowed to live in one dwelling. People were also instructed to make sure the streets outside their property were clean – a proclamation that was largely ignored – and the disease continued to spread.

By July 1665, the plague had won and was running rampant in the city of London. The disease pushed King Charles II from his capital and he fled to safety in Salisbury and Oxford. Taking this as a bad sign, many merchants and professionals also left, closing their businesses behind them. Coaches were filled with the rich and their belongings, rattling out of the city before the Black Death could reach them. Only a handful of clergymen and doctors remained to offer help to the suffering.

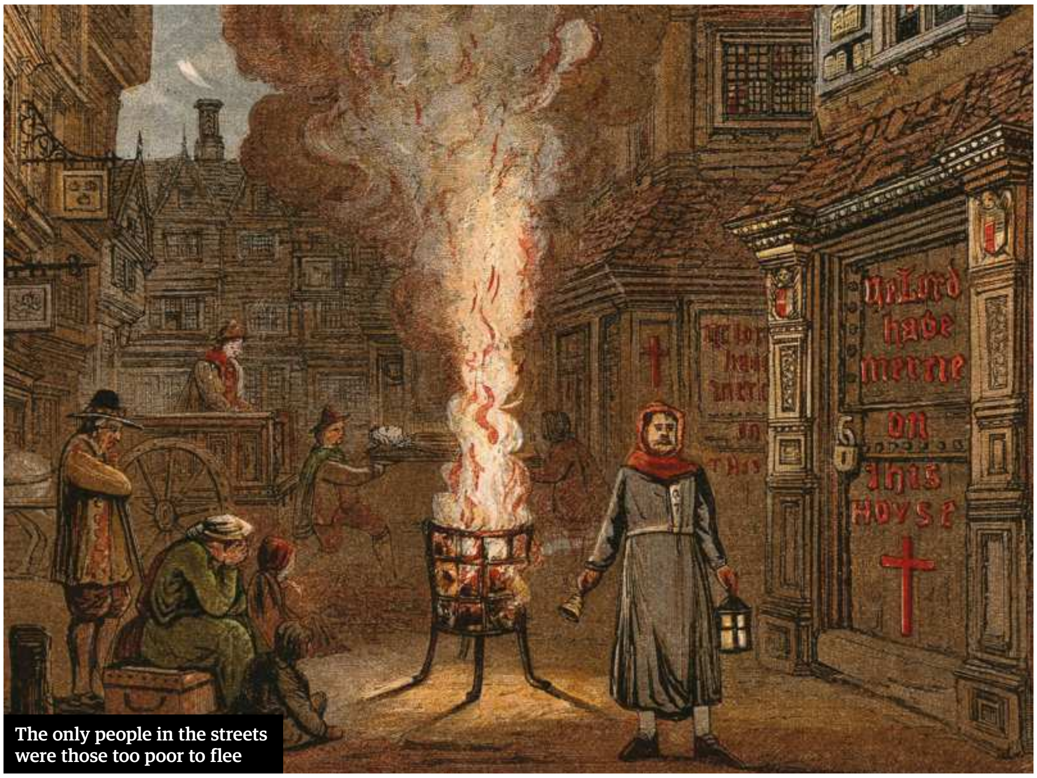
Although some of the poor did manage to flee, it was very difficult for them to do so. In order to leave, they needed to possess a certification of good health signed by the Lord Mayor himself and these were notoriously difficult to get hold of – especially for the penniless.

Those outside the city had heard of what was occurring within and were very reluctant to accept any of those escaping the infected areas – many towns and villages turned people away, even if they had the certificates. The lucky few who managed to escape had no option but to scavenge for food in the fields, with many dying of starvation and thirst in the blistering summer heat. It was a dire choice – stay in the city with its deadly plague, or face an uncertain future of wretched starvation outside.

Thousands died in the last week of July and the victims were becoming so numerous that burial grounds were overflowing. Great, gaping pits were dug in the earth to be filled with excess bodies, collected by drivers of the dead-carts that roamed the streets calling, "Bring out your dead!" The pits filled rapidly and the corpses decomposed in the



Although the 1665-66 outbreak was smaller than the earlier pandemic, there was widespread hysteria


YeLord haue mercie on this HOVSE

The only people in the streets were those too poor to flee

> "The plague had won and was running rampant in the city"

hot sun. One pit near the parish of Aldgate was found to be housing 1,114 bodies.

Because the city had no idea where the plague was coming from, they managed to make the epidemic worse by ordering a cull of dogs and cats, the animals that were actually helping by hunting the disease-carrying rats. When it was rumoured that 'bad air' was behind the pestilence, giant bonfires were lit in the streets in an attempt to cleanse it.

The citizens were terrified and the usually bustling streets of the capital were deserted. Businesses were closed and trade ceased – the only people around were the dead and dying, desperately in pain with sores as they pled for help. The villages around London were so terrified of the disease that they left their usual shipments of crops in specified areas for people to buy. They would hide at a distance, negotiating the price by shouting, and all of the money was left submerged in buckets of water.

Although London was undoubtedly hit the worst, the plague did spread to other areas of England – most notably the village of Eyam in Derbyshire. The disease entered the village as a result of a shipment of flea-infested clothes from the capital and the villagers decided to quarantine the entire village. Nobody left until the plague did. While this did work, the price was high – 259 of the town's 292 inhabitants died.

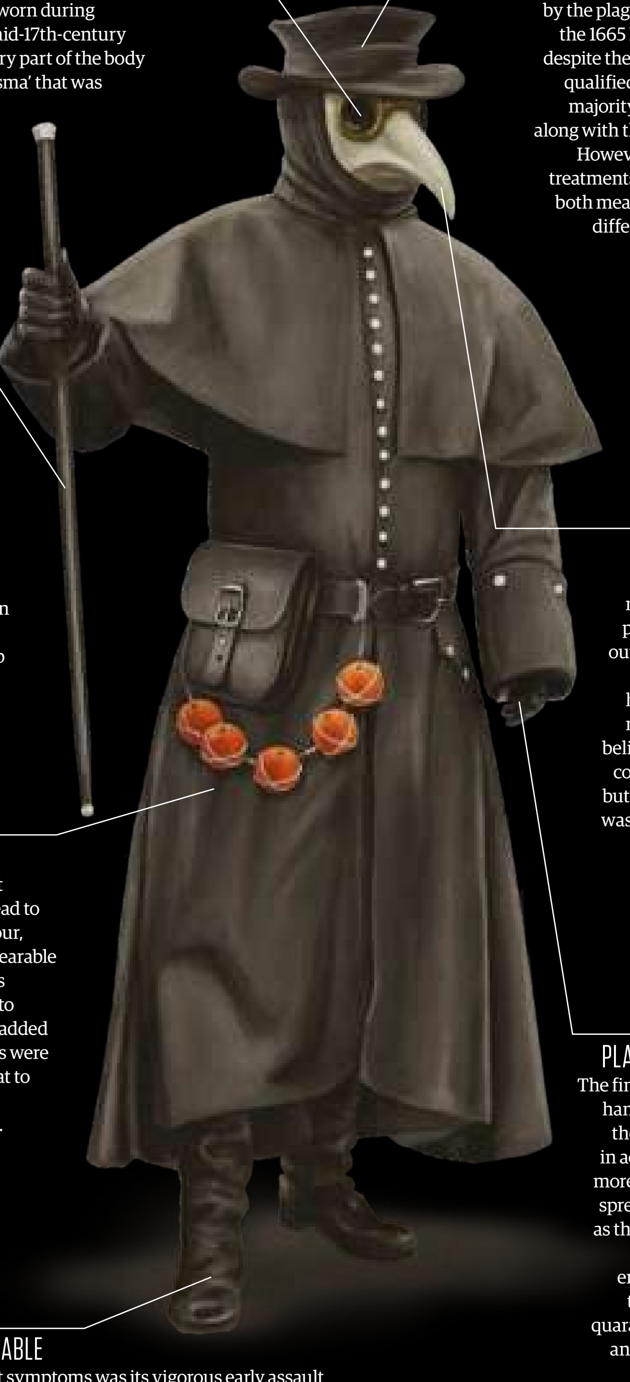
It wasn't until late autumn that the death toll began to wane and Charles II returned to London by February 1666, promptly followed by the gentry. Tradesmen opened their businesses again and the city slowly returned to life as a destination for those with big dreams instead of a place to avoid.

The actual death toll of the plague is still in some dispute as fatalities were not accurately recorded. Although the official numbers list 68,596 people as dying from the plague in 1665, the actual toll has been estimated to be as much as 200,000. Whatever the number, the disease had devastated the once prosperous city and it would take some time to recover completely.

Although the pestilence had already died down by the time of the Great Fire of London in 1666, this did help reduce the risk of further outbreaks as it prompted a rebuild of the city. Streets were widened, pavements built and the stinking open sewers were eradicated. The construction of buildings improved too, with brick and stone used in place of wood. All this helped to make England's beloved capital a healthier environment to live in, ensuring that the Black Death of 1665-66 would be the last major plague that the city would ever see.

The anatomy of a plague doctor

Europe, 1616-1721



GLASS EYES

PROTECTIVE PEEPERS

Built into the hood, these allowed the doctor to see without exposing their eyes to the outside air. The entire design of the outfit, attributed to French physician Charles de Lorme and extensively worn during devastating outbreaks in mid-17th-century Europe, was to conceal every part of the body from poisonous air or 'miasma' that was thought to cause disease.

HAT

HEALER'S HELMET

The leather hat was a staple uniform for Medieval doctors and the wide brim was thought to add protection. It was worn by the plague doctors during the 1665 London outbreak, despite the fact most weren't qualified physicians – the majority had fled London along with their rich clientele. However, the ineffective treatments administered by both meant this made little difference to sufferers.

CANE

MULTIPURPOSE INSTRUMENT

Despite their elaborate protection, doctors still kept contact with infected patients and the poorest echelons of society, who they were tasked with treating, to a minimum. The cane was used to examine infected victims, instruct family members on where and how to treat the wounds and generally keep people at bay.

BEAK MASK

OMINOUS AVIAN

The beak was the most recognisable part of the doctor's outfit. Its long cavity was stuffed with herbs, flowers and noxious oils in the belief that this would counteract miasma, but its sinister design was known to inspire terror in the sick.

OVERCOAT

GREASY BODY ARMOUR

The full-length leather coat covered the doctor from head to toe. Aside from metal armour, leather was the toughest wearable material around and so was considered robust enough to keep the plague at bay. For added protection, all the garments were covered in wax or animal fat to further repel miasma and sufferers' bodily fluids.

GLOVES

PLAGUE GAUNTLETS

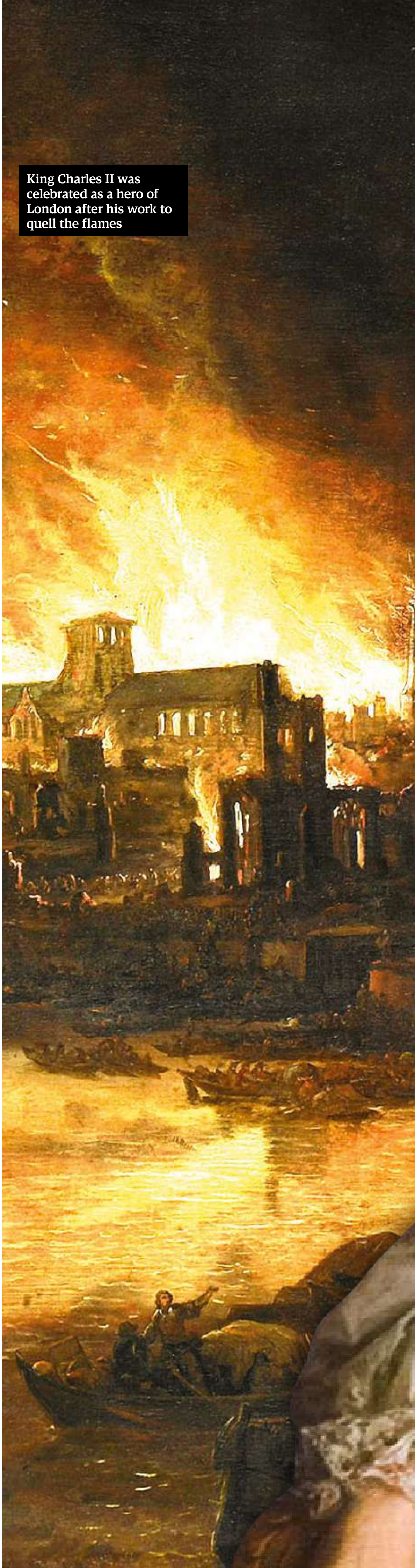
The final covering of the hands may have kept the doctors safe, but in actual fact they did more harm than good, spreading the disease as they visited victims and condemning entire families who they ordered to be quarantined alongside an infected member of the household.

BREECHES

PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE

One of the plague's nastiest symptoms was its vigorous early assault on the lymph glands around the groin, neck and armpits. For this reason, the heavy hood covered the neck and upper chest, while burly leather breeches were worn on the legs.

©Getty Images



King Charles II was celebrated as a hero of London after his work to quell the flames

Charles II and the Great Fire

How the Merry Monarch brought his city back from the brink of destruction in 1666

In the small hours of Sunday 2 September 1666, Samuel Pepys, Secretary to the Navy, was roused from his bed with news of a fire burning several streets away. He went to a window of his house close by London's east wall and looked out over the city. There was, indeed, a conflagration over towards Billingsgate, but these outbreaks were quite common in the narrow streets and timber-framed houses of the capital. Pepys decided that there was nothing to worry about and returned to bed. He needed his sleep. He - and England - had enough problems to worry about without a little fire in overcrowded London city.

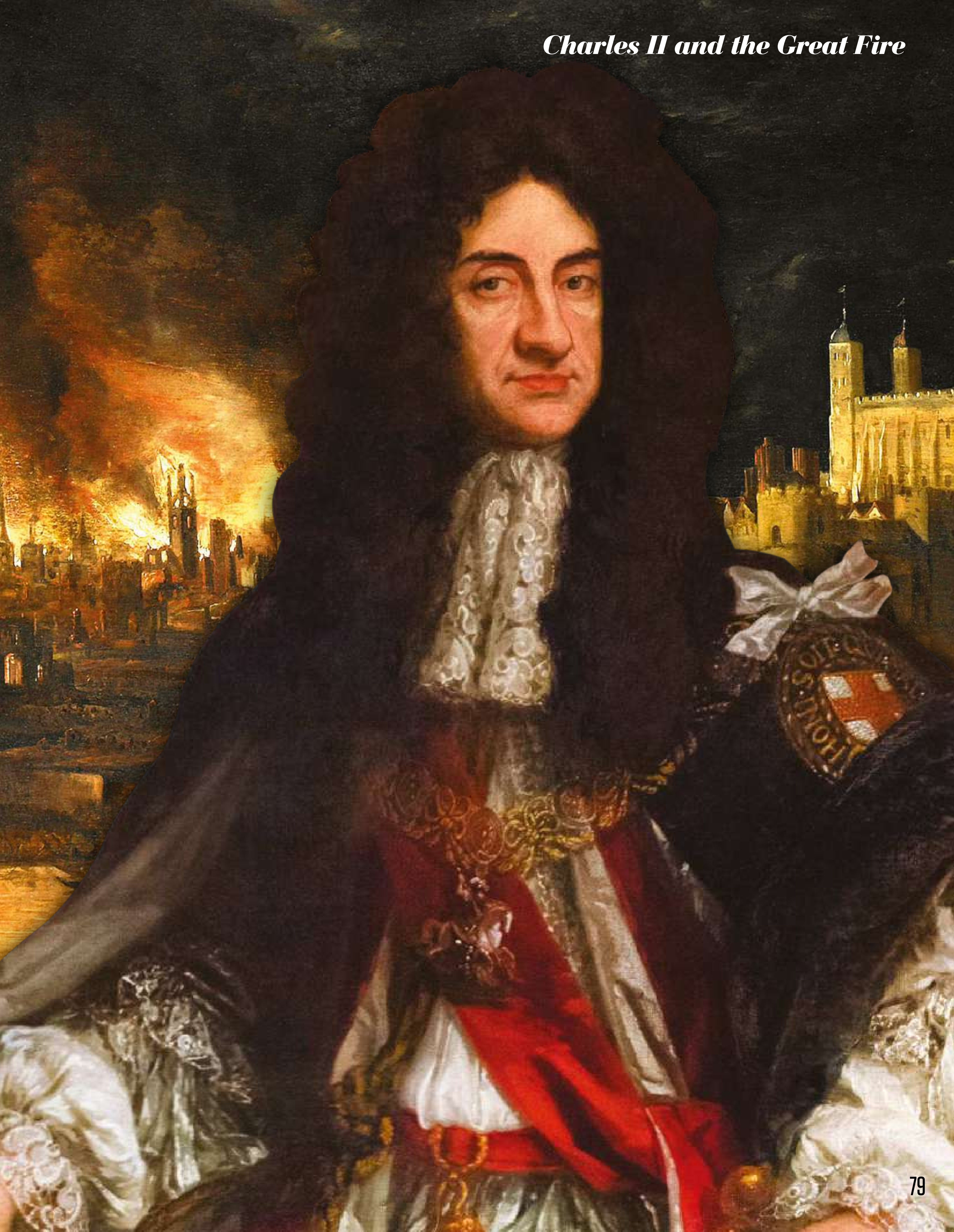
After all, the nation was divided and discontented and the existing government was highly unpopular. More than six years had passed since the return of Charles II from exile in Europe and the restoration of the monarchy after the republican rule of Oliver Cromwell. When the new king passed through London on his triumphant procession, the diarist, John Evelyn, had recorded:

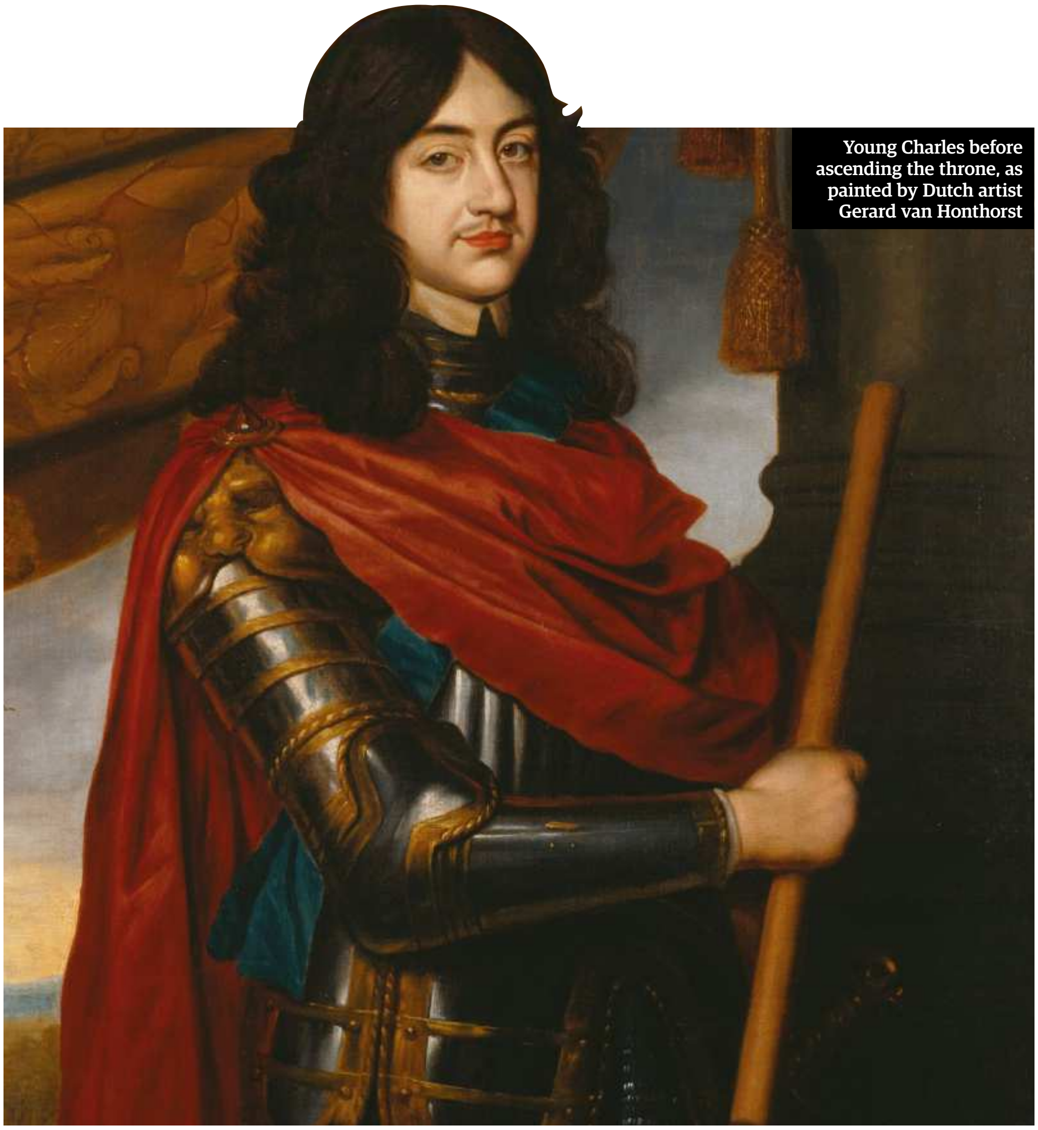
> *I stood in the Strand and beheld it and blessed God… for such a restoration was never seen in the mention of any history, ancient or modern, since the return of the Babylonian Captivity, nor so joyful a day and so bright ever seen in this nation.*

It is very easy to take such words at face value and to assume that Evelyn was speaking for the majority of his fellow countrymen. The myth of England being delivered from gloomy, oppressive Puritan rule by the 'Merry Monarch' is well ensconced in popular perception but it is a myth. It did not take long for the mood of the capital and the country to change as the policies of the new government were implemented.

If a week is a long time in politics, six years may seem like an eternity. Throughout the country people had seen royalist landowners settling scores with neighbours and tenants who had sided with the parliamentarians in the Civil War. The bishops, now installed or re-installed in their dioceses, rigorously enforced the new religious settlement and, as a result, 2,000 clergy who could not accept the 'high church' doctrines and ceremonies of the new regime were turfed out of office. Charles, who had learned his politics the hard way, was not totally behind the policies of the Restoration Parliament. He knew the importance of toleration. The French, among whom he spent most of his adult life, had a saying: 'ne reveillez pas le chien qui dort' - 'don't rouse the sleeping dog' - and it expressed a philosophy close to Charles' heart. However, too many of his followers were hellbent on revenge.

Unsuccessful foreign policy added to the people's disillusion. Early in 1665 Charles' advisers prodded him into a declaration of war against England's mercantile rivals, the Dutch. In the previous decade Cromwell had engaged in the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652-4). His navy had emerged triumphant. The profits were high. National prestige soared. Royal councillors urged that a repeat performance would be good for public morale, re-awaken the regime's popularity, and pour much-needed cash into government coffers. The reality was - to say the least - disappointing. England's navy was humiliated and the losses in ships and men,




Young Charles before ascending the throne, as painted by Dutch artist Gerard van Honthorst

were horrendous. Charles' subjects were often heard comparing him unfavourably with Oliver Cromwell. After the Four Days' Battle of June 1666 when 6,000 English sailors died, most of them in burning ships, one wit complained in verse:

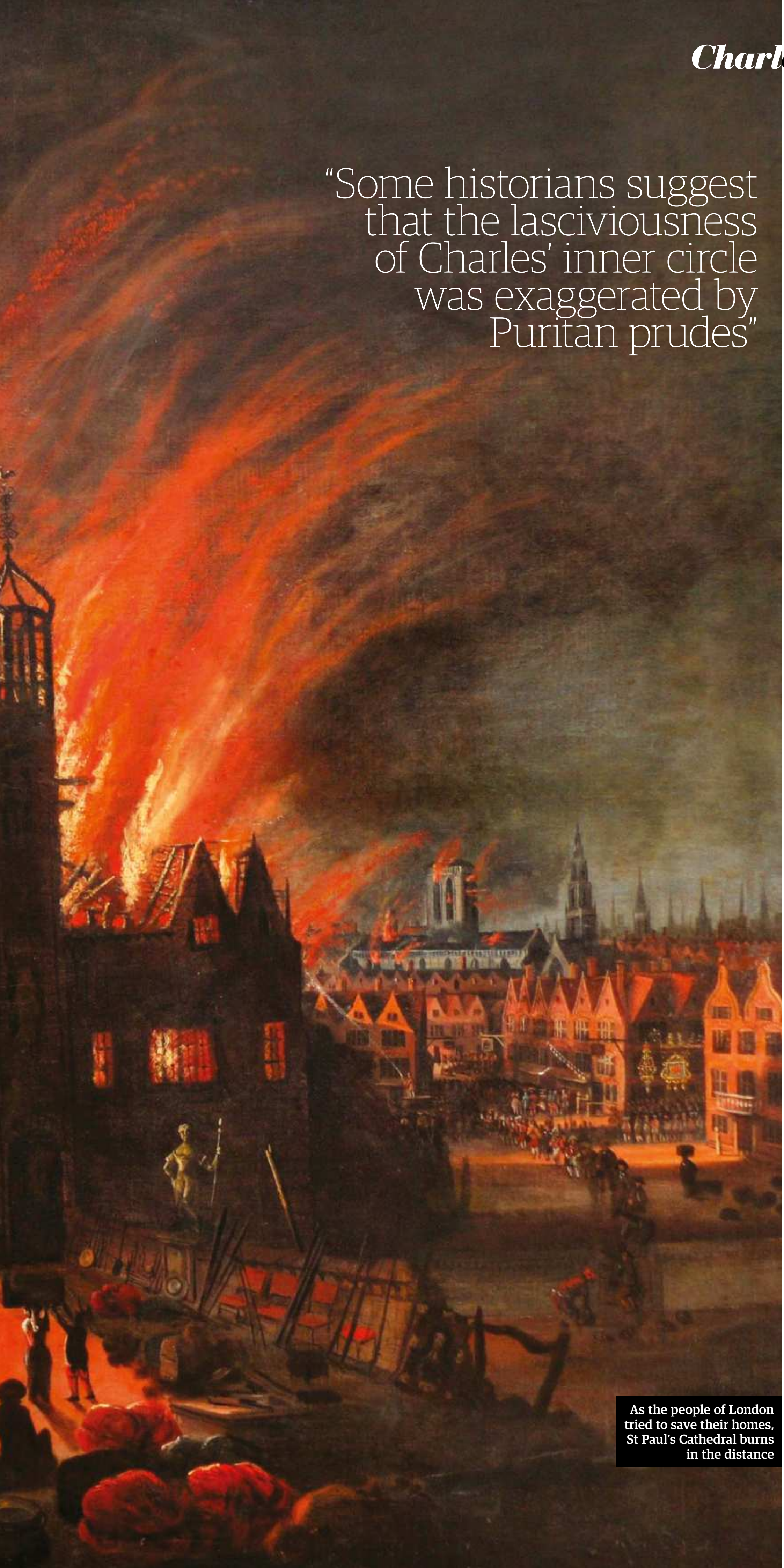
As Nero once with harp in hand surveyed
His flaming Rome and as that burned he played,
So our great prince, when the Dutch fleet arrived,
Saw his ships burned and as they burned he swived [fornicated].
So kind was he in our extremist need,
He would those flames extinguish with his seed.

Charles' behaviour was doing little to restore public confidence. The king, who had ascended the throne in 1660, was 30 years old and had spent all his adult life as a refugee sponging on the generosity of foreign rulers. During his exile he had cultivated the arts of survival – charm, duplicity, pragmatism and braggadocio. He was a royal con-man who used secret diplomacy, false promises and bribery to deceive foreign powers, parliament, his own ministers and his people, with one major objective always in view – never to go on his travels again. In his not-so-private life King Charles II was fun-loving and extremely self-indulgent.

There is a tendency among some historians to suggest that the lasciviousness of Charles' inner circle was exaggerated by Puritan prudes who hankered after the enforced propriety of the Cromwellian years. That fails to make allowance for the lax morals of the French court where the new king had spent much of his adolescence and early adult life. French morals had long been regarded with disdain by the English. Pepys, describing the overt promiscuity, drunkenness and open ridiculing of Christian morality of the king and his intimates observed that there ought to be "at least a show of religion in the government… sobriety is so fixed in the nature of the common Englishman that it will not out of him." No one could have been more correct and self-controlled than Charles' own father. Ordinary people were genuinely scandalised at the 'goings-on' of the royal cronies and were in no doubt where they had learned their behaviour.

A colony of French possess the court…
In the sacred ear tyrranic arts they croak,
Pervert his mind, his good intentions choke,
Tell him of golden Indies, fairy lands,
Leviathans and absolute commands.
Thus, fairy-like the king they steal away,
And in his place a Louis changeling lay.

Another poet had alluded not only to the loose morals of the new king, but also to those who persuaded him to ape the absolute monarchy of Louis XIV. Even those of Charles' subjects who were inclined to be indulgent of his peccadillos became less tolerant as they realised it was their taxes that were paying for the monarch's pleasures.



"Some historians suggest that the lasciviousness of Charles' inner circle was exaggerated by Puritan prudes"

As the people of London tried to save their homes, St Paul's Cathedral burns in the distance

Wars with the Dutch

Charles' war with the Dutch served to sully his name

After the Restoration a wave of nationalism and royalism flowed over the country demanding a showdown with the Dutch. In December 1664, hostilities began. The first major contest was the Four Days' Battle of June 1666. The carnage was appalling. 27 English ships were sunk or captured and 6,000 seamen perished. In the aftermath of the Fire of London, the Dutch sent a fleet into the Thames estuary and attacked the naval dockyard at Chatham, destroying several moored vessels and towing away others. It was 'a dishonour never to be wiped off'.

Six years later, Charles plunged into another Anglo-Dutch war, at the behest of his paymaster, Louis XIV, who was at war with the Dutch. Under the terms of the Secret Treaty of Dover, he called upon his ally for naval aid. Now there was little enthusiasm for war in parliament or in the country at large. The allied strategy was for France to carry out a land invasion while England blockaded the Dutch coast. Charles looked forward to a victory that would revenge the earlier defeat, give his subjects something to cheer about and deliver rich spoils of war. However, instead of waiting to be attacked, the Dutch fell upon the French and English fleets rendezvoused off Southwold on the Suffolk coast. The Battle of Sole Bay was a furious contest of naval fire power. English losses hit 2,500 men, including the vice-admiral, the earl of Sandwich.

The French on land were defeated by the deliberately flooded terrain. Everything now depended on a successful naval assault. The allied fleets, wary of the shallows and currents of the Dutch anchorages, drew the enemy out into deeper water. The result was the Battle of the Texel – another bruising 'draw'. By now, most Englishmen shared Evelyn's opinion: "The folly of hazarding so brave a fleet, and losing so many good men, for no provocation in the world but because the Hollander exceeded us in industry, and in all things else but envy." Parliament now refused to continue funding the war and Charles had to sue for peace.

“June 1665 proved to be unbearably hot. It encouraged the growth and spread of viruses bearing disease”

Charles had a devoted wife, Catherine of Braganza, who gave her husband everything except the one thing he wanted, and the nation needed - an heir to the throne. That the inadequacy did not lie with Charles was only too obvious. By his clutch of mistresses he had several children. The behaviour of the king's women, their rivalries and the mastery they had over him were common knowledge. On one occasion Pepys and Evelyn discussed the situation as they took a turn around Westminster Hall:

> *Talking of the badness of the government, where nothing but wickedness and wicked men and women command the king: that it is not in his nature to gainsay anything that relates to his pleasures; that much of it arises from the sickliness [ie poor health] of our ministers of state, who cannot be about him as the idle companions are and, therefore, he gives way to the young rogues; and then from the negligence of the clergy, that a bishop shall never be seen about him, as the King of France hath always .. the King of France hath his mistresses but laughs at the foolery of our king that makes his bastards princes and loses his revenue upon them and makes his mistresses his masters.*

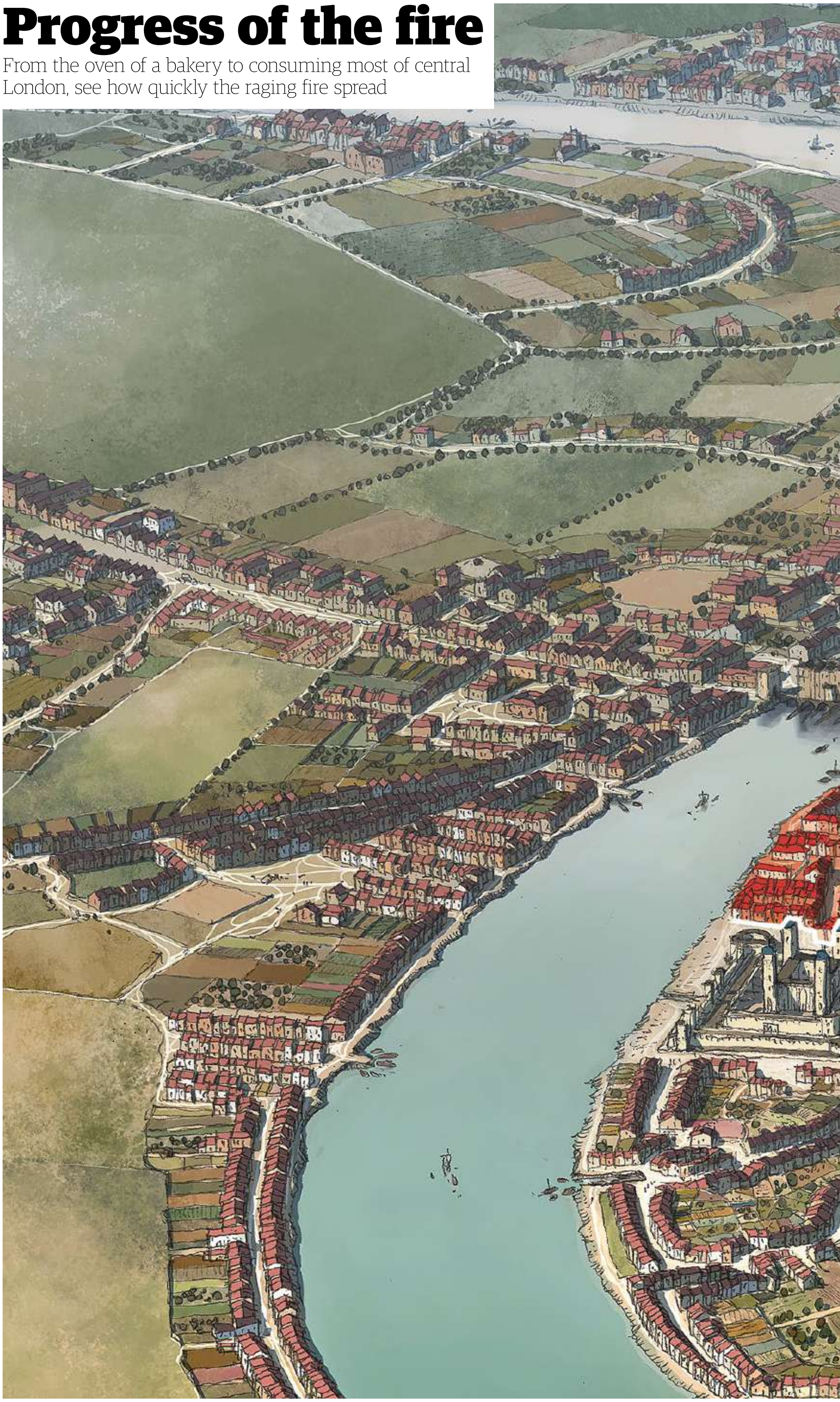
But the political inadequacies of the government, and the scant respect commanded by the king, paled into insignificance beside the next woe to fall upon the nation. June 1665 proved to be unbearably hot. It encouraged the growth and spread of viruses bearing disease and they thrived, particularly wherever people lived together in cramped and unhygenic conditions. By the end of the month, 600 deaths from bubonic plague had been registered in London. That was a mere prelude.

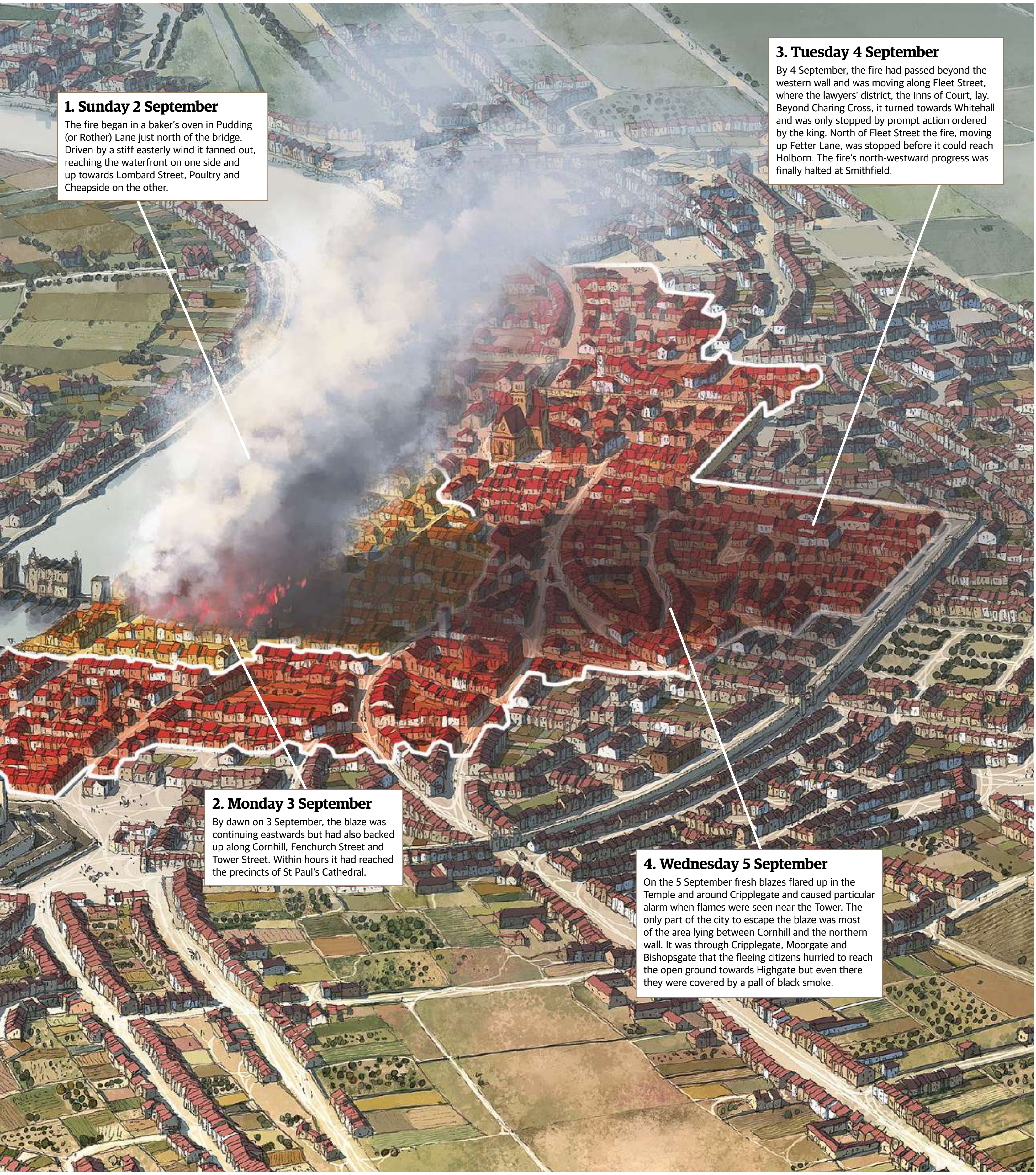
In September, 30,000 deaths were reported. Before the pestilence had done its worst probably three times that number had perished in London alone. The horror of the epidemic can scarcely be imagined - bodies tumbled into mass graves; infected households locked in to prevent the spread of contagion. By the end of the year, the plague had run its course but the government had little cause to rejoice. The treasury was empty, the war was going badly and peace negotiations were making no progress. Charles may well have cursed his bad luck. Many preachers attributed the catalogue of disasters to divine punishment of a profane king. But worse was to come.

The fire began that dark Sunday morning in a baker's oven in Pudding Lane, near London Bridge.

Progress of the fire

From the oven of a bakery to consuming most of central London, see how quickly the raging fire spread





1. Sunday 2 September

The fire began in a baker's oven in Pudding (or Rother) Lane just north of the bridge. Driven by a stiff easterly wind it fanned out, reaching the waterfront on one side and up towards Lombard Street, Poultry and Cheapside on the other.

2. Monday 3 September

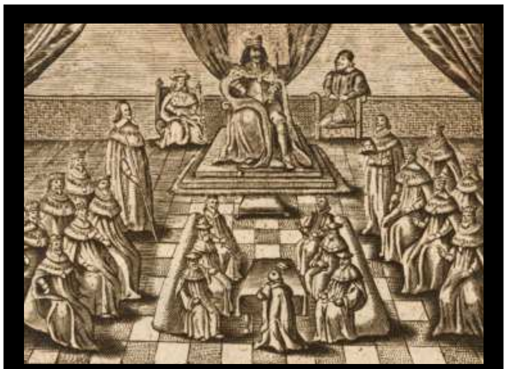
By dawn on 3 September, the blaze was continuing eastwards but had also backed up along Cornhill, Fenchurch Street and Tower Street. Within hours it had reached the precincts of St Paul's Cathedral.

3. Tuesday 4 September

By 4 September, the fire had passed beyond the western wall and was moving along Fleet Street, where the lawyers' district, the Inns of Court, lay. Beyond Charing Cross, it turned towards Whitehall and was only stopped by prompt action ordered by the king. North of Fleet Street the fire, moving up Fetter Lane, was stopped before it could reach Holborn. The fire's north-westward progress was finally halted at Smithfield.

4. Wednesday 5 September

On the 5 September fresh blazes flared up in the Temple and around Cripplegate and caused particular alarm when flames were seen near the Tower. The only part of the city to escape the blaze was most of the area lying between Cornhill and the northern wall. It was through Cripplegate, Moorgate and Bishopsgate that the fleeing citizens hurried to reach the open ground towards Highgate but even there they were covered by a pall of black smoke.



Charles II and Parliament

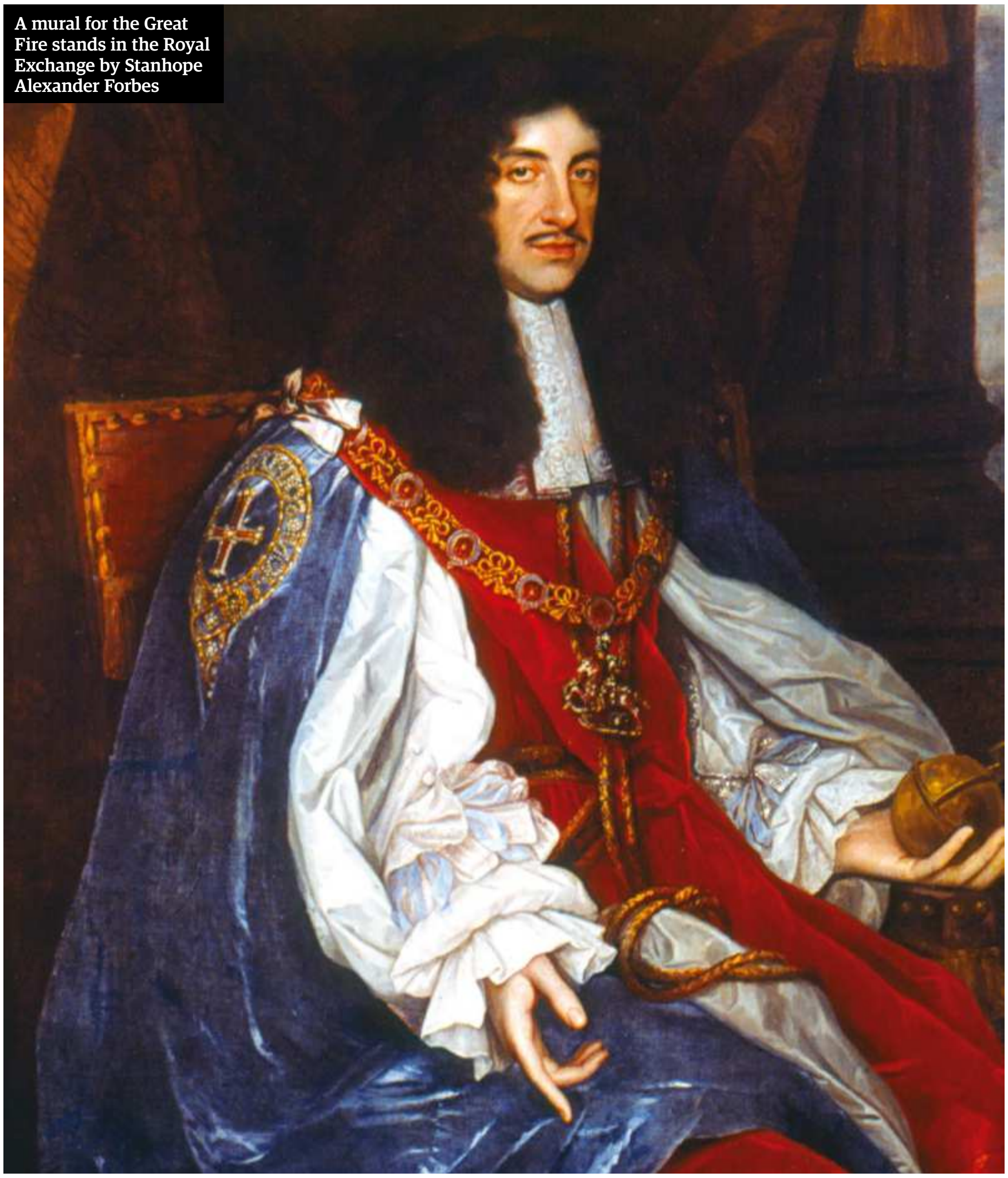
The king's relationship with parliament was rocky, resulting in two-party politics

The recent war had been fought partly to permit freedom of worship, but now that the bishops were back in their dioceses they and their allies in Parliament were determined to restore a monolithic Church of England. Charles fought hard to ensure a measure of toleration, but Parliament introduced a series of harsh measures against religious dissent of all kinds. The 2,000 clergy who could not accept the Prayer Book were deprived of their livings. Laws excluded any who would not receive Anglican sacraments from office.

What made the religious issue even more tense was mounting concern for the future. Charles had no legitimate heir and would be succeeded by his brother, a suspected covert Roman Catholic. Charles' tactics for dealing with a Parliament increasingly conscious of its power by virtue of its control of the money supply were twofold. He tried to manage it and he tried to do without it. His ministers laboured with some success to create a 'court party' by manipulating elections and bribing members. In 1670 Charles agreed the Secret Treaty of Dover with Louis XIV of France. He would receive financial backing in return for agreeing to join the French in another war against the Dutch Republic and would declare himself a Catholic as soon as he was in a strong enough position to do so. For a time the stratagem worked, but by the end of 1673 Parliament had learned of the king's duplicity. They refused to grant financial supply before certain grievances had been redressed. Charles turned to Louis, who informed him that the cost of the disastrous Dutch war had left him unable to keep filling his ally's coffers. Charles was forced to beat a humiliating retreat.

From this point English politics became a snakepit of faction fighting and personal rivalries. Further anti-Catholic legislation went through Parliament debarring all 'papists' from membership of either house. The assembly was now bent on preventing the accession of the Roman Catholic Duke of York as monarch. In January 1679, angry and frustrated, Charles dissolved Parliament. In the end, it was Louis XIV who again came to the aid of the monarch. He agreed substantial subsidies on condition that Charles ruled without parliament and did for the last five years of his reign.

The bitter contest between Charles II and his parliaments had several long-term consequences but the most significant was the emergence of two political groupings – pro- and anti- the court. In the ensuing years these morphed into Whigs and Tories. The origins of confrontational politics in which government and opposition face each other across the floor of their chamber had been established.



A mural for the Great Fire stands in the Royal Exchange by Stanhope Alexander Forbes

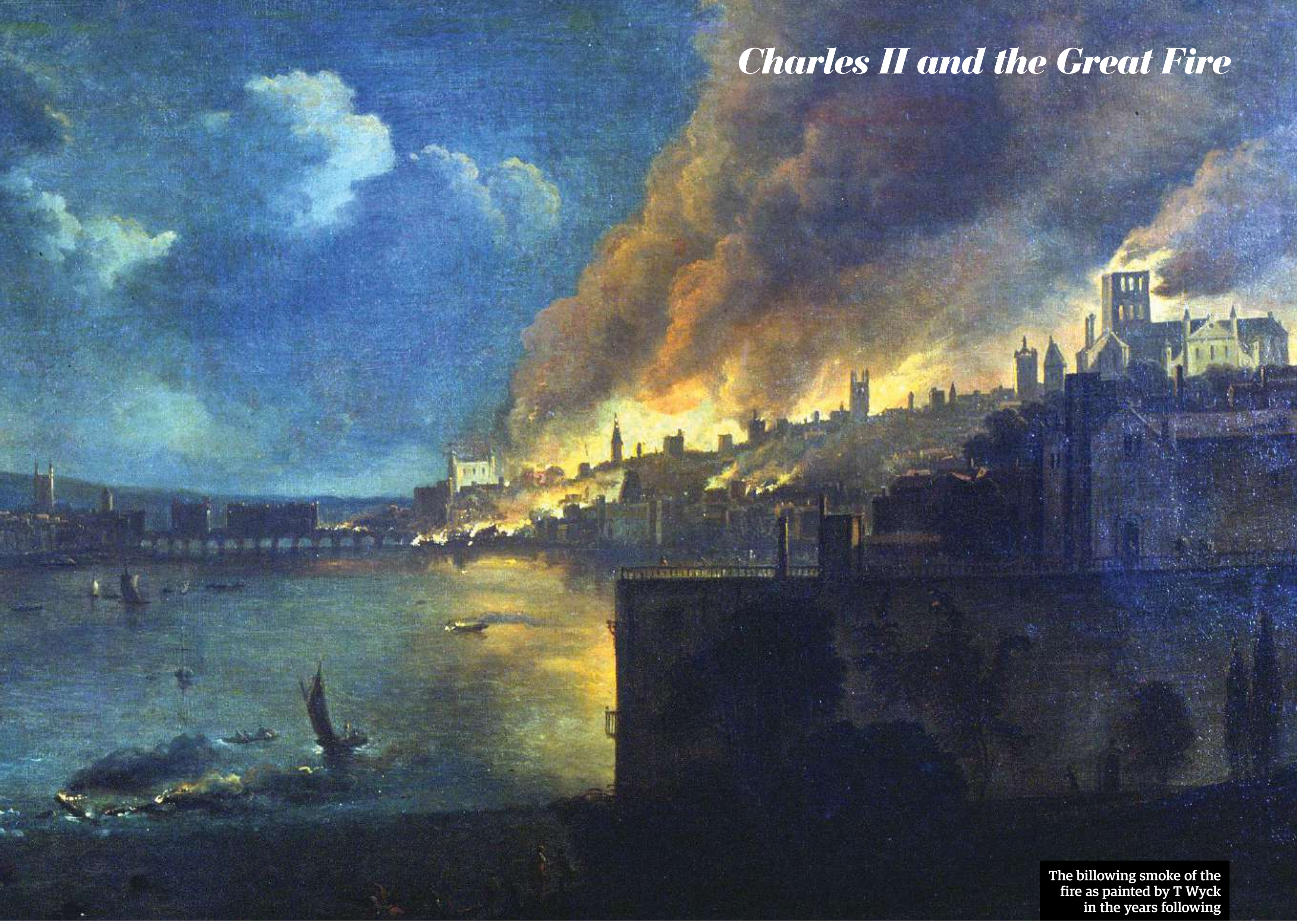
Samuel Pepys roused himself at 7am and was still not overly concerned by what he could see from his window. Only when news of the devastation arrived borne by alarmed callers did he walk to the Tower of London to gain a better vantage point.

Now he realised that the emergency might be serious. He took a boat and had himself rowed westwards, under the bridge, which was already burning. Only now did he grasp the extent of the catastrophe. A strong east wind was driving the flames into the heart of the capital. Citizens were swarming the riverbank to get themselves and their possessions into boats. Pepys ordered his boatman to make all speed for Westminster, where he reported to the king. Charles was unaware of the crisis because the bend of the river obscured the view of the city. How would he react?

The answer is 'with alacrity and vigour'. He immediately sent word to the mayor ordering him to pull down buildings in order to impede the spread of the fire and promised troops to help him. In the afternoon, he went downriver to see the disaster for himself. He landed at Queenhythe and talked with the crowd of refugees, gaining detailed information and urging on everyone the need to pull down buildings in the path of the conflagration. He was less than 100 metres from the blaze but appeared careless of the danger in his eagerness to help.

Back at Westminster, he summoned a group of Privy Councillors to draw up a plan of campaign to combat the disaster in London. A committee was appointed with headquarters at Ely House in Holborn, just beyond the western wall of the city. From here groups of soldiers and volunteers were despatched to various points to do whatever was necessary to check the fire's progress.

Charles spent most of Monday in preventing what would have been another tragedy. The strong wind was carrying a rain of sparks towards Westminster and there was a possibility that the palace and all the government offices might be set alight. The king supervised the erecting of fire breaks at Charing Cross and had teams out



The billowing smoke of the fire as painted by T Wyck in the years following

"Charles carried a pouch of gold guineas to provide spontaneous rewards to men conspicuous for their valiant efforts"

smothering any embers that managed to reach the western end of Fleet Street.

The first thing Tuesday morning found him and his brother, the Duke of York, back in the city. They rode to and fro, passionately urging on the firefighters and sometimes dismounting to join the chains of people passing buckets of water. Charles also carried a pouch of gold guineas to provide spontaneous rewards to men conspicuous for their valiant efforts.

The fire had now overarched the eastern wall, as Evelyn graphically explained in his published diary:

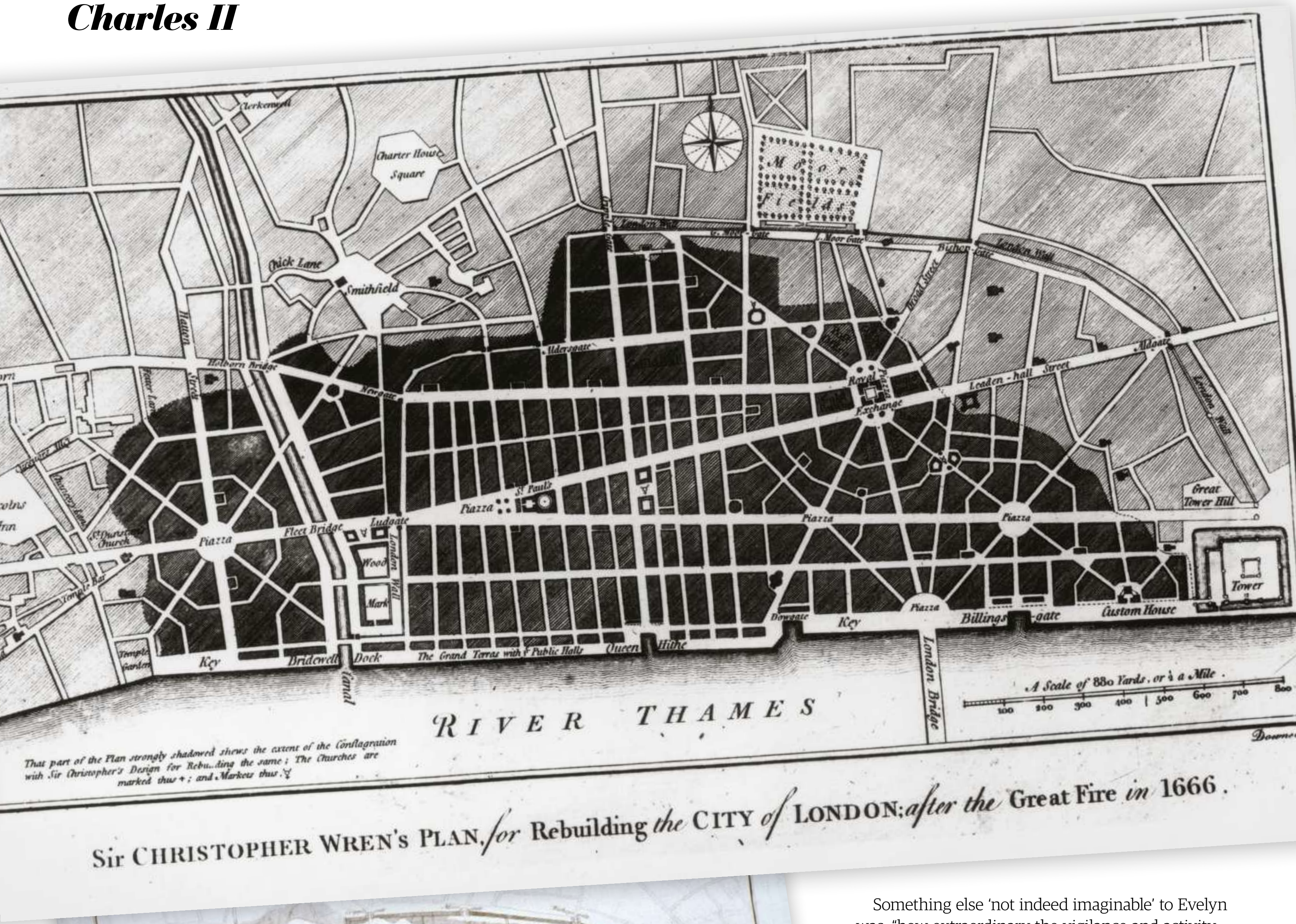
> *The burning still rages; I went now on horseback, and it was now gotten as far as the Inner Temple; all Fleet Street, Old Bailey, Ludgate Hill, Warwick Lane, Newgate, Paul's Chain, Watling Street, now flaming and most of it reduced to ashes, the stones of Paul's flew like grenades, the lead melting down the streets in a stream, and the very pavements of them glowing with fiery redness, so as nor horse nor man was able to tread on them, and the demolitions had stopped all the passages, so as no help could be applied; the eastern wind still more impetuously driving the flames forwards: Nothing but the almighty power of God was able to stop them, for vain was the help of man: On the fifth it crossed towards Whitehall, but Oh the confusion was then at that Court: It pleased his Majesty to command me among the rest to look after the quenching of Fetter Lane end, to preserve (if possible) that part of Holborn.*

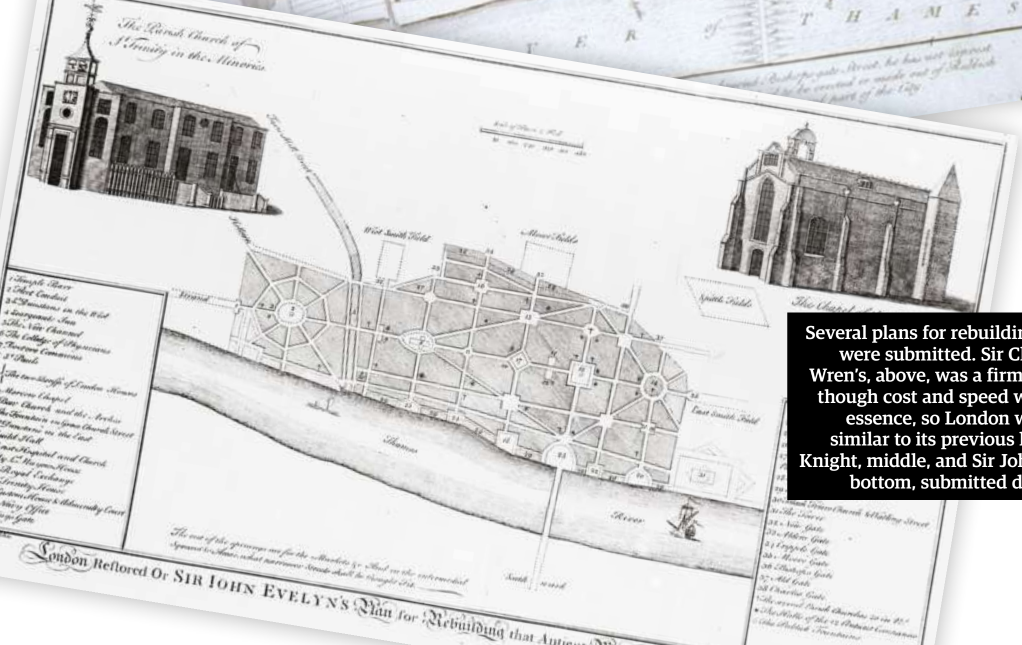
Charles was everywhere. For more than 30 hours without a break he rode about the northern parts of the capital, which had so far avoided the flames. He sent word downriver to the dockyard for bread to be brought from the navy stores to feed the homeless and destitute. He gave orders for the relief of the hundreds of citizens gathered in makeshift camps on the spaces of Moorfields and Spitalfields to the north. He instituted the setting up of a relief fund. By the time he returned to Westminster his clothes were wet and muddy and his face black with soot.

Emergency situations usually bring out both the best and the worst in people and this was certainly the case in September 1666. Kind souls came in from the surrounding country to offer succour to the homeless. Other individuals thought only of themselves. At an early stage of the conflagration, Charles urged the authorities to blow up some of the houses that were yet to be set alight in order to create wider gaps than was possible merely by demolition. Evelyn noted the response with disgust: "Tenacious and avaricious men, aldermen, etc, would not permit, because their houses must have been of the first."

By Thursday, the wind had finally died down. That and the blowing up of houses with gunpowder which, at long last, had been brought to speed the demolition work, enabled the Great Fire to be brought under control. However, vigilance was still needed as occasional bursts of flame shot up from the smouldering embers.

The king now travelled over to the Tower of London and oversaw the destruction of wooden buildings within the large fortress. Although the fire had moved in the opposite direction, there was always the possibility of sparks causing a secondary blaze in the vicinity of the arsenal where the main stores of gunpowder were stored. Had they exploded, the devastation would have been simply unimaginable.


Sir CHRISTOPHER WREN's PLAN, for Rebuilding the CITY of LONDON; after the Great Fire in 1666.
That part of the Plan strongly shadowed shews the extent of the Conflagration with Sir Christopher's Design for Rebuilding the same; The Churches are marked thus +; and Markets thus
Clerkenwell
Charter House Square
Chick Lane
Smithfield
Holborn Bridge
Hatton Street
Newgate
Aldersgate
Moor Fields
London Wall
Moor Gate
Bishops gate
Broad Street
Royal Piazza Exchange
Leaden-hall Street
Aldgate
Great Tower Hill
Tower
Custom House
Billings-gate
London Bridge
Piazza
St Pauls
Ludgate
Fleet Bridge
Wood Mark
Key
Dowgate
Queen Hithe
The Grand Terras with ye Publick Halls
Bridewell Dock
Canal
Temple Garden
RIVER THAMES
A Scale of 880 Yards, or ½ a Mile.
100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800


The Parish Church of St Trinity in the Minories
London Restored Or Sir John Evelyn's Plan for Rebuilding that Antient
River

Several plans for rebuilding London were submitted. Sir Christopher Wren's, above, was a firm favourite, though cost and speed were of the essence, so London was rebuilt similar to its previous layout. Val Knight, middle, and Sir John Evelyn, bottom, submitted designs too

Something else 'not indeed imaginable' to Evelyn was, "how extraordinary the vigilance and activity of the king and duke was, ever labouring in person, and being present to command, order, reward and encourage workmen, by which he showed his affection to his people and gained theirs."

Whether or not any popularity would last would depend on three very particular factors – how Charles tackled the enormous task of reconstructing the razed city, whether he was prepared to put in efforts to improve his public image, and whether his luck would last.

The king certainly applied himself enthusiastically to the immense task of rebuilding the nation's charred capital. Over 383 acres of the city lay in ruins. 13,000 houses, 89 churches (including the cathedral) had been reduced to rubble, along with the halls of the livery companies and other corporate and public buildings. The challenge was monumental and mind-blowing – but so was the opportunity.

On his travels, Charles had visited and admired some of Europe's most impressive cities and his imagination was fired by the prospect of 'phoenix London' rising from the ashes. He had a genuine interest in architecture and something of a flair for it. Within days a Privy Council committee had been set up to work hand-in-hand with the city fathers. Charles often attended their meetings. His

"In Sir Christopher Wren, Charles found an architect of genius who shared his aesthetic preferences"

vision for a new city involved a complete rethink: interconnecting straight thoroughfares of houses built of stone and brick. Sadly, it was not to be. Cost-consciousness and conservative thinking ensured that much of the old shape of London would be retained.

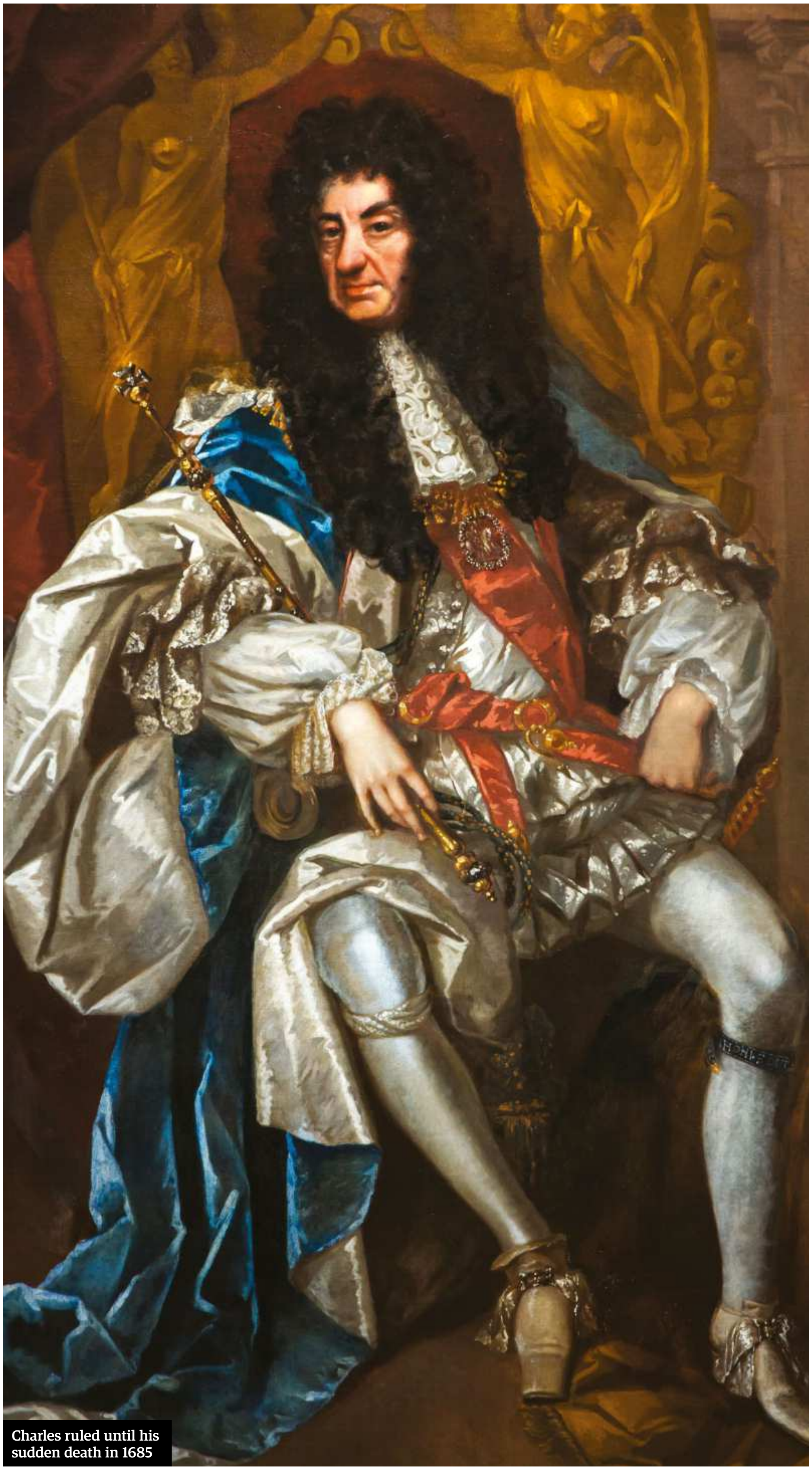
In Sir Christopher Wren, Charles found an architect of genius who shared his aesthetic preferences for the Baroque and Classical revival fashions prevailing on the continent. Wren and his office drew up the plans; the committee pondered them; the king urged them and supported them by issuing proclamations in support of particular projects and priming the financial pump from the government's slender means.

No adventurous, sophisticated new London came into being, but at least the rebuilding got underway quickly. Wren's churches and, of course, the revolutionary St Paul's Cathedral gave hints of what might have been had Charles and Wren's vision been realised. Londoners knew that their king had done all he could do. In 1674, they acknowledged this by presenting him with the Freedom of the City of London – the only reigning monarch ever to have received this honour.

In another endeavour, Charles was less successful. He could not scotch the spreading rumours. In the 17th century people always looked for reasons. When disaster struck they believed there must be cause and purpose for it. It might be explained as an act of divine judgement, or the work of the devil, or the plotting of evil men. In this case various theories were championed. Some even thought to blame the Catholics. Others blamed Anabaptist sectaries. Some put the blame on the godless behaviour of the court, which had stirred divine wrath in retaliation.

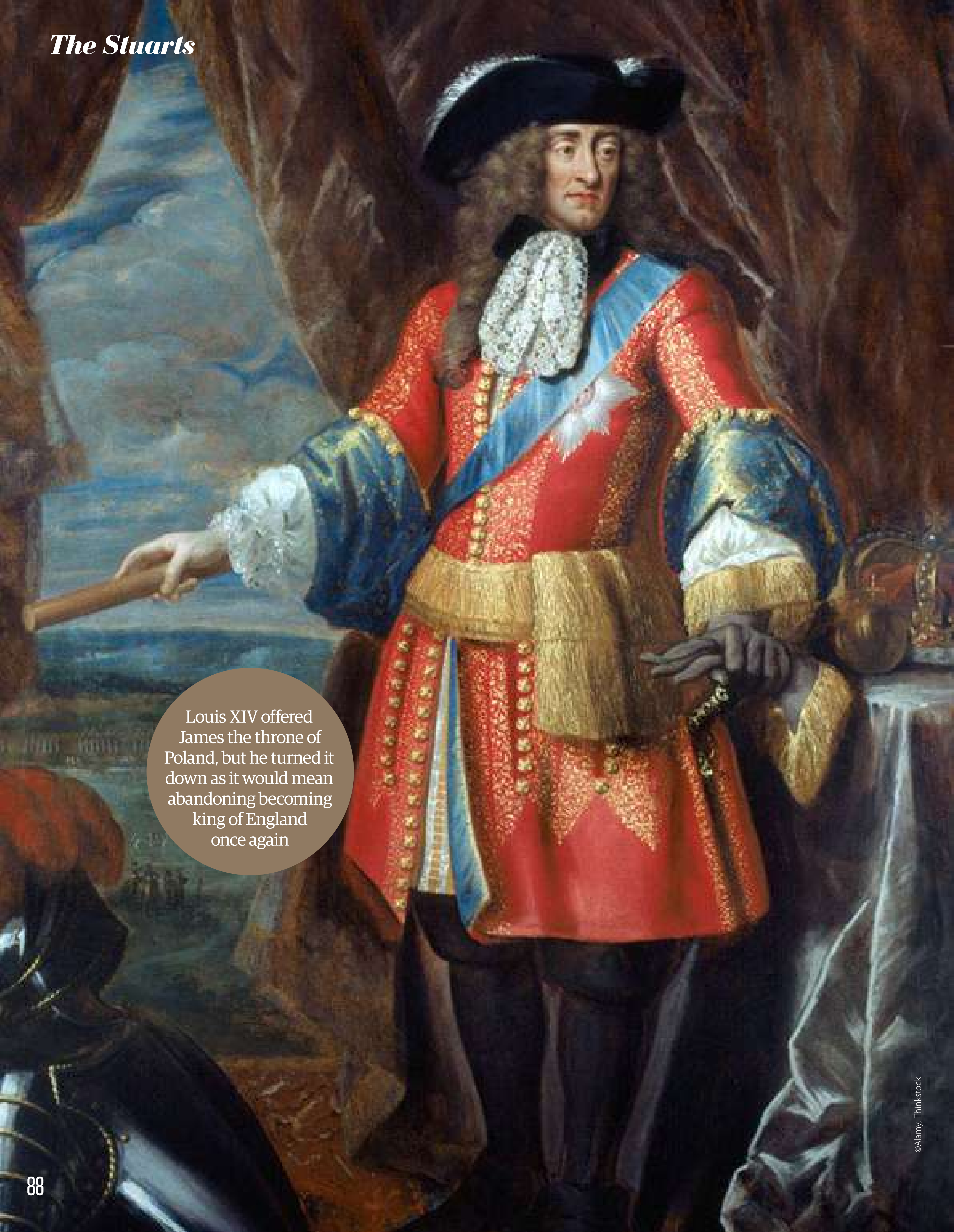
As early as 6 September, Charles rode to Moorfields to speak to the refugees that were camped there. He offered them encouragement and pledged government support but his main objective was to convince the dispirited crowd that the fire was an act of God, beyond human comprehension and that their plight was not the result of scheming incendiarists. Few were convinced. The fire widened already existing divisions and they would later cause a different kind of blaze – a political inferno that threatened to consume the king.

Meanwhile, Charles' luck did not last. The Dutch War went badly. His relations with parliament deteriorated. And, of course, he did not mend his lascivious ways.



Charles ruled until his sudden death in 1685

©Alamy, Getty Images, TopFoto, Rocio Espin



Louis XIV offered James the throne of Poland, but he turned it down as it would mean abandoning becoming king of England once again

©Alamy, Thinkstock

James II

England's last Catholic monarch, James II's reign was largely spent battling with Parliament

Timeline

1633

A future king
King Charles I of England's wife Henrietta Maria of France gives birth to a second son, James, at St James' Palace in central London.
14 October 1633

The safekeeper
After escaping capture at the Battle of Edgehill, James remains in the city of Oxford, a royalist stronghold. Here he is made a Master of Arts by the university.
October 1642

A new title
As a monarch's second surviving son, James is formally created Duke of York by his father in accordance with tradition.
22 January 1644

Siege of Oxford
The surrender of Oxford by the Royalists is negotiated with the Parliamentarians. As part of the agreement, James, Duke of York, is ordered to be confined at St James' Palace.
May-June 1646

James escapes
After two years of confinement, James escapes his captors with the help of Joseph Bampfield, a Royalist soldier. Dressed as a woman, James flees to The Hague.
1648

Secret marriage
James marries the noticeably pregnant Anne Hyde in a secret ceremony. She would go on to give birth to the future queens Mary and Anne.
3 September 1660

AN EXACT
COLLECTION
OF THE
Debates
OF THE
HOUSE of COMMONS,
Held at
WESTMINSTER,
October 21. 1680.

Exclusion crisis
Worried about his Catholicism, many want James excluded from the line of succession and would rather the throne went to Charles II's illegitimate son James Scott, 1st Duke of Monmouth. The succession isn't altered in the end, although a sizable number of MPs turn against the future king as a result.
1679

A new wife
James marries his second wife, Mary of Modena, a devout Italian Catholic, by proxy. She arrives in England on 21 November.
20 September 1673

A Catholic heir
James and Anne secretly convert to Catholicism. The public find out in 1673 when he refuses to swear an anti-Catholic oath and resigns as Lord High Admiral.
1667

TURN TO PAGE 90

Rye House Plot
After efforts to exclude James and his Catholic tendencies from the succession, a group of Whig extremists plan to kill James and his brother, Charles II. Once the plot is discovered the Earl of Essex commits suicide while Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney are sentenced to death on flimsy evidence.
1683

New monarch
Charles II dies without leaving an heir behind. As a result, James becomes James II of England and VII of Scotland.
6 February 1685

Battle of Sedgemoor
James' accession to the throne is challenged by his late brother's eldest illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth, in what becomes known as the Monmouth Rebellion. James defeats him at the Battle of Sedgemoor. In Scotland, the Earl of Argyll also rises up but is quickly stopped.
6 July 1685

The Glorious Revolution
Worried about their king's Catholicism, Parliament plot to overthrow him and replace him with his eldest daughter, Mary, and her Protestant Dutch husband William of Orange. After trying to reach an accord, James eventually leaves for France.
1688

TURN TO PAGE 96

A new prince
James' second wife, Mary of Modena, gives birth to a son, James Francis Edward. England begins to worry about the prospect of a Catholic dynasty.
10 June 1688

Religious tolerance
James publishes his Declaration of Indulgence, aiming to establish religious freedom. Protestants see it as an assault on their dominance.
4 April 1687

No more Parliament
As they refuse to support his Test Act, James prorogues Parliament for a year and a half before dissolving it. It doesn't meet for the rest of his reign.
November 1685

Irish support
Technically still king of Ireland, James lands here and starts trying to build some support to aid his bid to reclaim England.
1689

Battle of the Boyne
In a bid to regain his lost throne, James and his Catholic allies fight against William of Orange 30 miles north of Dublin. James suffers a heavy defeat and Northern Irish Protestants still celebrate William's victory on 12 July to this day.
1 July 1690

Attempted assassination
A group of Jacobites plot to ambush and kill William III. Unfortunately for them, they are found out and support for James begins to waver.
1696

1701

Final breaths
James dies in exile at Chateau de Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France. His coffin is kept in the side chapel of a Parisian church until it is raided during the French Revolution.
16 September 1701

The last Catholic king

As a Catholic king ruling a Protestant nation, James II struggled to unite religions

Words by Derek Wilson

James was the second surviving son of Charles I and, like his elder brother, went into exile during the Parliament-led revolution. He served in the French army and proved himself a brave and effective commander. He was also a womaniser. Among his conquests was Anne Hyde, daughter of Prince Charles' senior adviser (and later Earl of Clarendon). Shortly before the Restoration, Anne became pregnant and James promised to marry her. The wedding took place secretly in September 1660. The only children of this union destined to survive were two daughters, Mary and Anne.

During the early years of Charles II's reign it seemed unlikely that James would succeed him. However, Charles' wife had three miscarriages and thereafter proved incapable of further childbearing. Since James and Anne had no sons, it seemed that the male Stuart line was doomed to extinction.

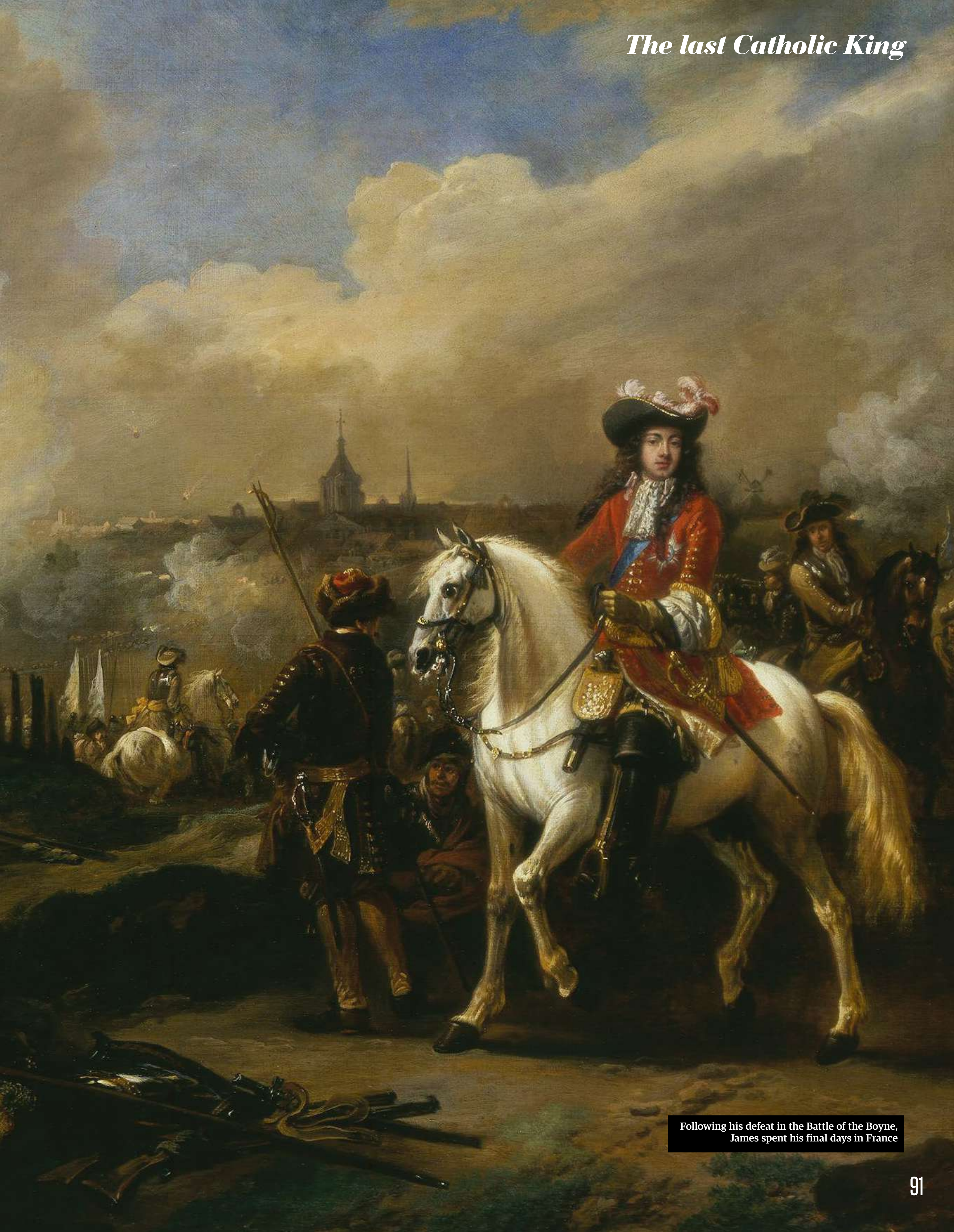
James was a covert Catholic and announced his religious allegiance publicly after his wife's death in 1671. Two years later he married again, choosing as his bride an Italian – and Catholic – princess, Mary of Modena. This awakened fears that a Roman Catholic dynasty really might inherit the Crown. King Charles had decreed that James' two daughters must be brought up as members of the Church of England and Mary was married to the Dutch Protestant prince, William of Orange. A return to the religious conflicts that had bedevilled the realm for 150 years was widely feared.

> Two principles were at stake: the monarch's right to decide the national religion and people's right to freedom of worship

Two principles were at stake: the right of the monarch to decide the national religion and the right of the people to freedom of worship. The majority in Parliament wanted the realm to be united by allegiance to the Church of England.

Charles II, ever pragmatic, knew that significant numbers of his subjects were either Protestant Dissenters (i.e. Nonconformists) or Catholics and struggled to achieve a measure of toleration. James, by contrast, was a sincere and ardent Catholic and an authoritarian. When he came to the throne in 1685 on Charles' death, he was determined to restore England and Scotland to papal allegiance.

The position on his accession on 6 February 1685 was clear: Dissenters and Protestants were excluded



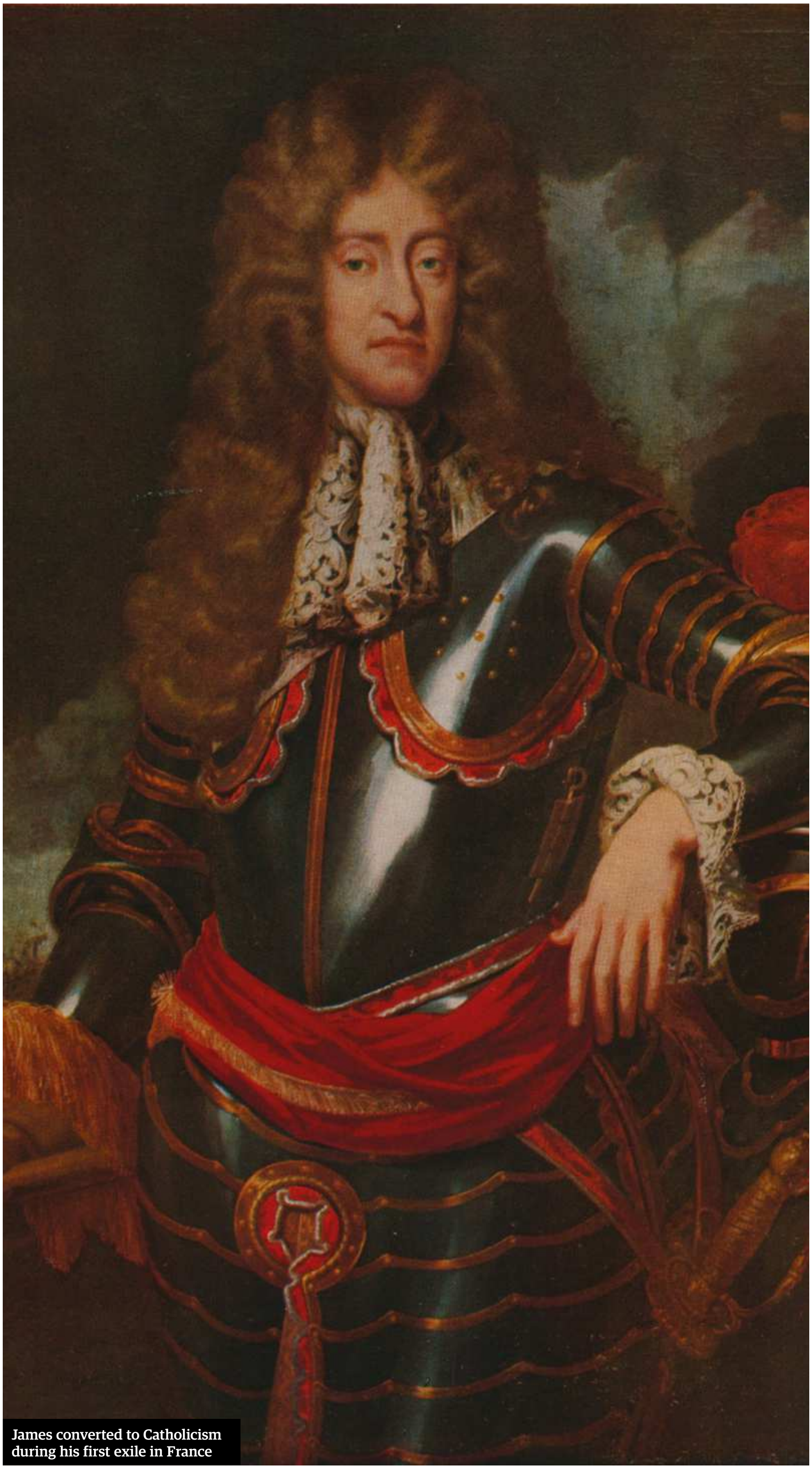
Following his defeat in the Battle of the Boyne, James spent his final days in France from all public offices if they refused to worship according to the rules of the established church. In June, simultaneous, Protestant-led, revolts occurred in the Scottish Lowlands, led by the Earl of Argyll and in the southwest of England by the Duke of Monmouth, an illegitimate son of Charles II. Both were defeated – the ringleaders were executed and hundreds of their followers were put to death or transported overseas.

The suppression of Monmouth's Rebellion was particularly severe. It was entrusted to George Jeffreys, recently raised to the peerage by James. Jeffreys carried out the trials of the captured rebels with such vigour that they were called the Bloody Assizes. About 300 prisoners were hanged or hanged, drawn and quartered as traitors. More than 800 were transported and an unknown number died in the unsanitary prisons. James must take his share of the blame for the savage repression of Monmouth's Rebellion. It was customary for the king to pardon some offenders who appealed to him. James not only declined to show clemency, he also endorsed Jeffreys' harshness and raised him to the position of lord chancellor.

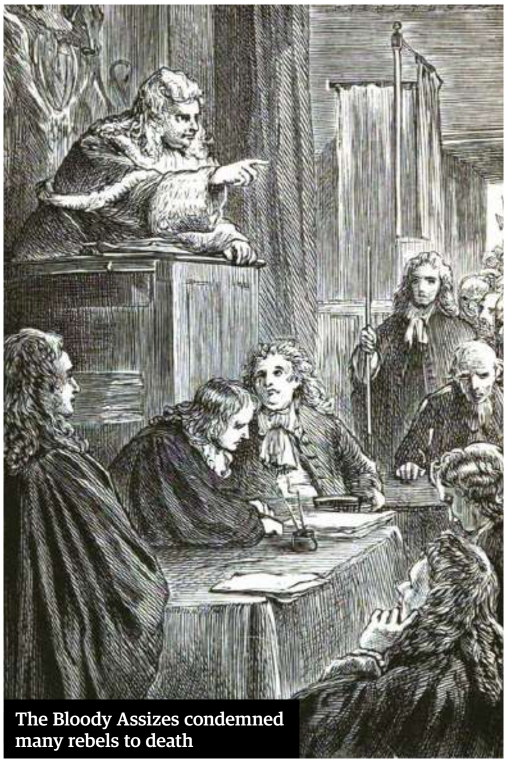
> "Both revolts were defeated – the ringleaders were executed and hundreds of their followers were put to death"

The failure of these protest movements emboldened James to impose his will more firmly on the realm. The army had been increased to deal with the rebellions but, once the crisis was over, the king not only refused to reduce it in size, he demanded that Parliament vote for taxes to pay for it. He also made several senior military appointments from among the Roman Catholic minority. When the English and Scottish parliaments expressed displeasure at what they feared was a return to the autocratic regime of Charles I, James prorogued them.

On 4 April 1687, he issued a Declaration of Indulgence suspending all penal laws against those not belonging to the established church. He claimed that this was to grant his subjects freedom of conscience, but at the same time he was appointing Catholics to positions of influence and believed that, when restraints were removed, people would flock back to the Roman church. The diarist John Evelyn noted that this was obviously done "to ruin the Church of England… What this will end in, God Almighty only knows, but it looks like confusion". Many clergy refused to read



James converted to Catholicism during his first exile in France



The Bloody Assizes condemned many rebels to death

the Declaration to their congregations and seven bishops petitioned the king to withdraw it. James had them arrested and tried for sedition (29 June 1688). Crowds flocked to the court room and filled the streets outside. When the verdict of Not Guilty was given, there was wild rejoicing. Cannons were fired and bonfires lit. James' popularity had never been at a lower ebb.

But another event occurred in that same month that really sealed the king's fate. On 10 June, Queen Mary was delivered of a healthy baby boy. What most of James' subjects feared had come to pass – there was a real concern that a Catholic dynasty would be established. So strong was the opposition and the lack of trust in the king that an unfounded rumour went round that the baby was not his. The story went that an infant had been smuggled into the queen's bedchamber in a warming pan.

All this domestic activity was played out against a background of complex foreign policy. The main figure on the European political stage was Louis XIV, the Sun King. He had been king of France since 1643 and presided over a long period of military and political expansion abroad and the regeneration of Catholic faith at home. In the 1680s he was at the height of his power. He had extended France's eastern and northern boundaries and, by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), he outlawed all non-Catholics from his dominions. As a result, over 200,000 Huguenots (French Protestants) emigrated to other countries.

Louis had always been a friend of the Stuarts, providing them with refuge during the Cromwellian era and subsidising them financially to enable them to resist parliamentary pressure. But by 1685 the Sun King was becoming the victim of his own success. Other nations resented his overweening power and feared that he was about to launch a Catholic offensive that would threaten the freedom of non-Catholic states.

The man who now emerged as the figurehead of resistance to Louis was William, Prince of Orange, the ruler (stadtholder) of the Dutch Republic, James' nephew and son-in-law. William was firmly Protestant. King Louis was furious at the marriage. "You have given your daughter to my mortal enemy," he raged in a letter to James. He was right. The cornerstone of William's policy was the formation of an alliance strong enough to confront Louis. That would have to include England.

James was now pulled in different directions by his friendship with Louis, his love for Mary and his

The Battle of the Boyne

James' last stand in Ireland

James' best chance of regaining his throne lay in using Ireland, with its largely Catholic population, as a base from which to attack England and Scotland. In March 1689 he landed in Ireland, but for a year there was no military activity.

In June 1690 William arrived at Carrickfergus to face the Jacobite threat. He marched south with an army of 36,000 well-trained troops. James' smaller force, which included French soldiers and many Irish peasant volunteers, advanced to the River Boyne to block his path. The battle was fought over control of a ford near Drogheda. William attempted to distract the enemy with a flanking movement at Roughgrange. James detached a large contingent to meet this threat, but a deep and boggy ravine prevented the forces getting to grips with each other. William's main army crossed the Boyne at Oldbridge but were then pinned down by the Jacobite cavalry. This enabled James' army to withdraw in good order towards Duleek.

A more positive response by James might have produced a different result, but the order to retreat demoralised many of his men, who simply drifted away. Two days later William entered Dublin and James was on his way back into exile, this time for good.

“Some suggested to William that he should do the unthinkable – lead a revolt against James”

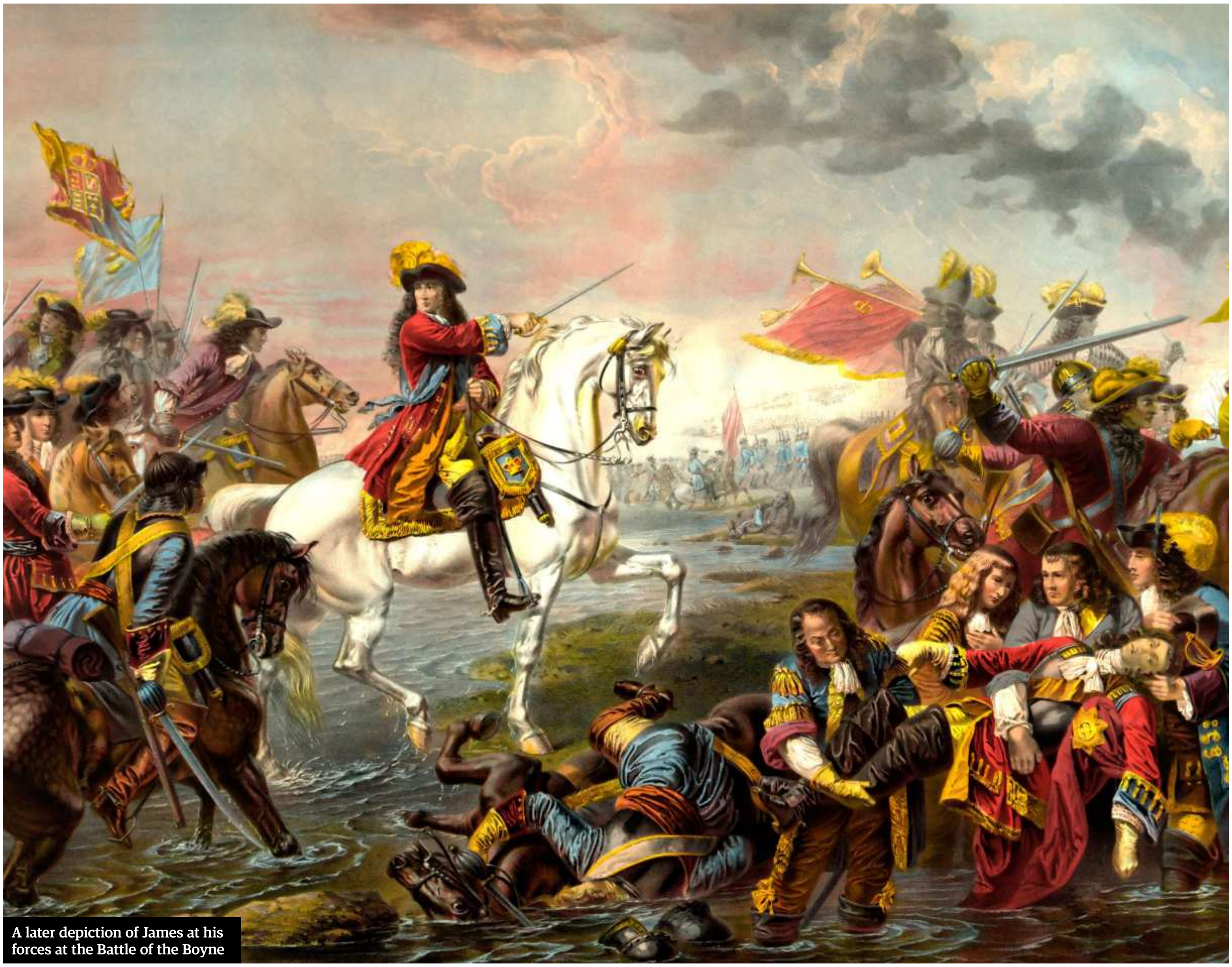
passionate commitment to Roman Catholicism. In 1685 French forces occupied William’s principality of Orange. Acting on Louis’ orders, they added religious persecution to destruction and slaughter by making public bonfires of Bibles and trying to convert captives at swordpoint. When William asked his father-in-law to lodge a protest, James’ representations at Versailles were tame and completely ineffective.

Two years later it was William’s turn to display a lack of co-operation. As head of the family, James demanded that his daughter and son-in-law support his 1687 Declaration of Indulgence. William’s reply was brief and firm: “You ask me to countenance an attack on my religion. I cannot with a safe conscience do it, no, not for the crown of England, nor for the empire of the world.”

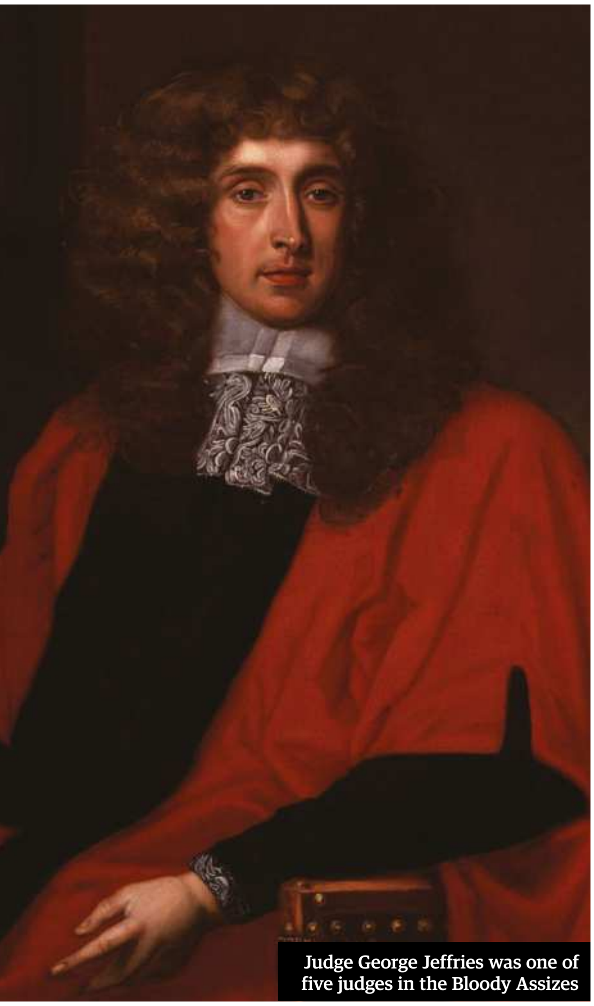
By this time James was becoming widely unpopular. Many Dissenters and members of the established church migrated to the Low Countries. Some suggested to William that he should do the unthinkable – lead a revolt against James with the object of transferring the crown to Mary. They begged the prince not to waver. With every month that passed, they urged, James, backed by his large army and the Catholic appointees occupying strategic positions, would soon make himself impregnable, establish a papistical tyranny like his father’s and abrogate Mary’s right of succession. For the moment William refused to respond.

The tension was rising, but the only one who seemed to be oblivious to it was James. He could not believe that treason would raise its head in his own family and was convinced that the nation had no taste for a resumption of civil war. His policies became increasingly aggressive, underpinned, as they were, by James’ conviction that his cause was holy. The safe delivery of a male heir seemed to be irrefutable proof of God’s blessing. The child took precedence over all other claimants to the throne. That included James’ daughters, Mary and Anne, and Prince William (Charles I’s only other grandson). At a stroke, the Catholic succession was secured. If the opposition was going to act it had to be now. There could be no more delay.

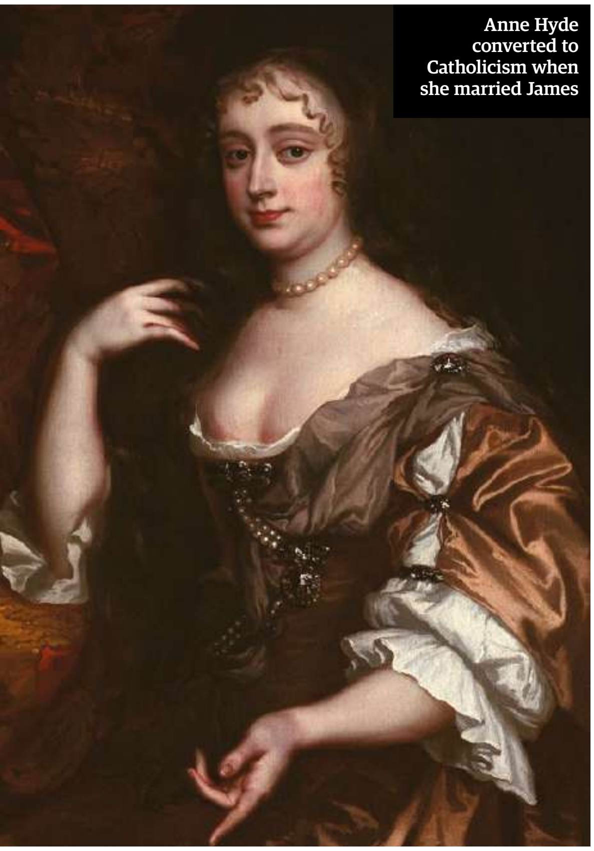
On 30 June 1688, while the streets were still crowded with people celebrating the acquittal of the seven bishops, Arthur Herbert, a career naval officer who had risen to the rank of rear admiral but had recently been sacked by the king, crossed the North Sea, bringing William an invitation



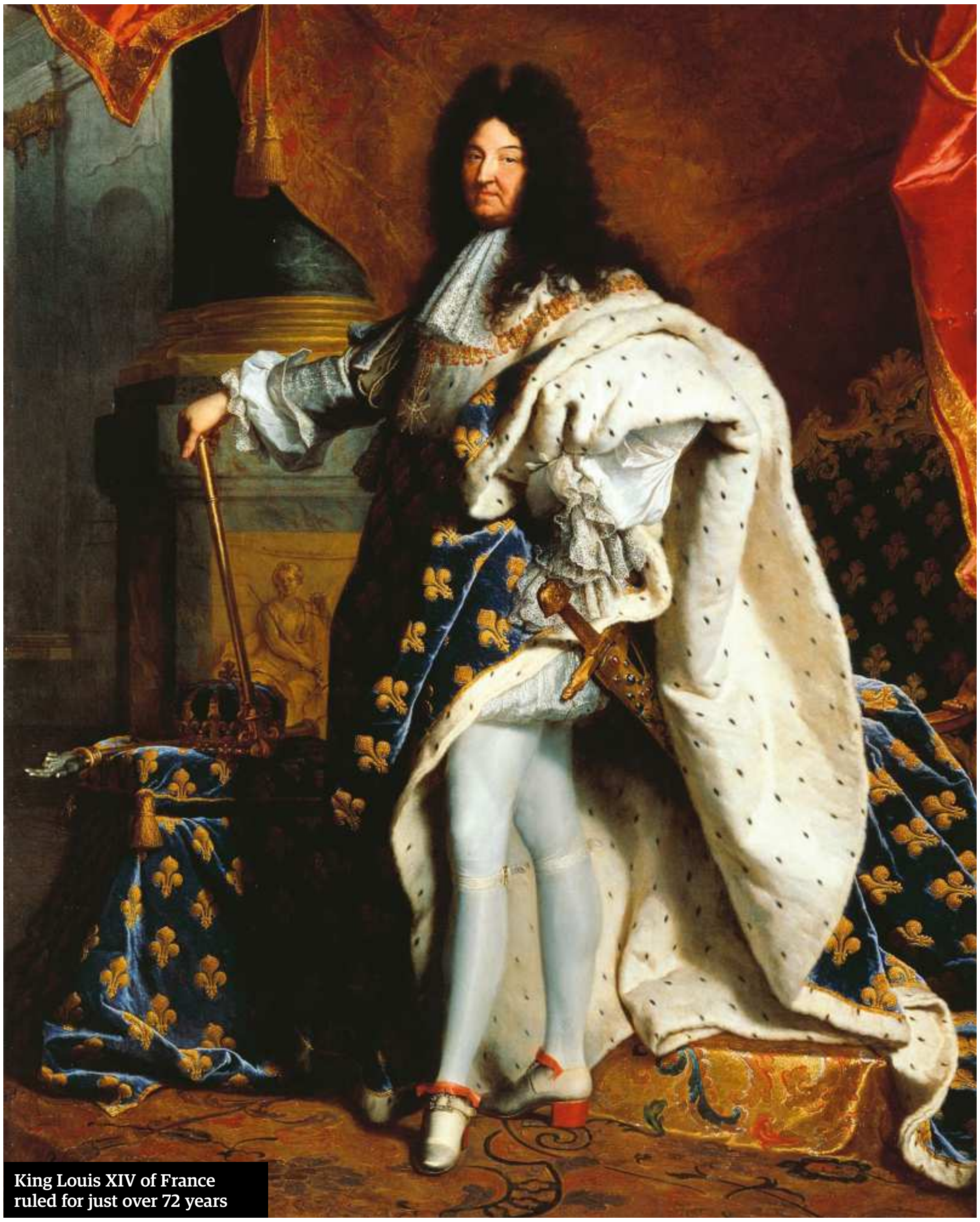
A later depiction of James at his forces at the Battle of the Boyne



Judge George Jeffries was one of five judges in the Bloody Assizes



Anne Hyde converted to Catholicism when she married James



King Louis XIV of France ruled for just over 72 years

signed (in code) by seven leading aristocrats and churchmen, asking the prince to invade and pledging themselves to raise troops in support of his cause. William accepted the invitation but did not hurry to England. He made his plans cautiously and painstakingly, keeping in close contact with the conspirators who were steadily raising support in the country.

An important consideration was the reaction of Louis XIV. Would he come to James' aid? Despite the fact that he was now facing a coalition of seven European states who had come together in the League of Augsburg, he offered military and naval contingents to his English friend. Surprisingly, James turned down the offer.

By now James was in a state of confusion. While throwing himself frantically into military preparations and organising impressive troop reviews, he made a series of concessions to his political and religious opponents. He boasted that he was ready to face any military threat and was confident of the support of his subjects. But secretly he was probably clinging to the (reasonable) hope that William would not venture to cross the water in the autumn when the North Sea was notorious for gales.

On 29 October William of Orange set sail. No sooner had he done so than a ferocious storm blew up. His battered ships were forced to limp back to land. It seemed that James' 'Catholic wind' had come to his rescue. He allowed himself to relax. But William had committed himself too far to abandon his expedition now. As soon as the necessary repairs had been completed on 11 November the fleet set sail again. Four days later William landed at Torbay. The invaders moved slowly eastward, ready for the battle that never came. Support for the king evaporated.

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The Glorious Revolution

Acting on invitation, the House of Orange secured the throne from the ailing James II

Britain's collective memory remembers the Norman invasion of 1066 in great detail, but another, arguably more influential invasion is often forgotten. This was the invasion of Prince William of the House of Orange, called over by irate nobles to oust the Stuart dynasty from the country and restore the balance of power. It would become known as the Glorious Revolution thanks to supportive Whig historians and is incorrectly seen as a bloodless revolution. While fighting in England was indeed kept to a minimum, the revolts in Scotland and Ireland proved to be incredibly bloody affairs. Whatever the cost, the revolution of 1688 would see the royal, political and religious landscapes of England, Scotland and Ireland change forever.

Ever since the English Civil War and Oliver Cromwell becoming Protector in 1651, there had been a long-simmering feud between king and Parliament. Charles II had to contend with these tensions during his restoration, not to mention religious strife caused by the Catholic crown clashing with Protestant nobles. Both he and his brother, King James II, had to deal with the common fear of 'popery' in the country – spreading from the Protestant aristocracy and Whig party.

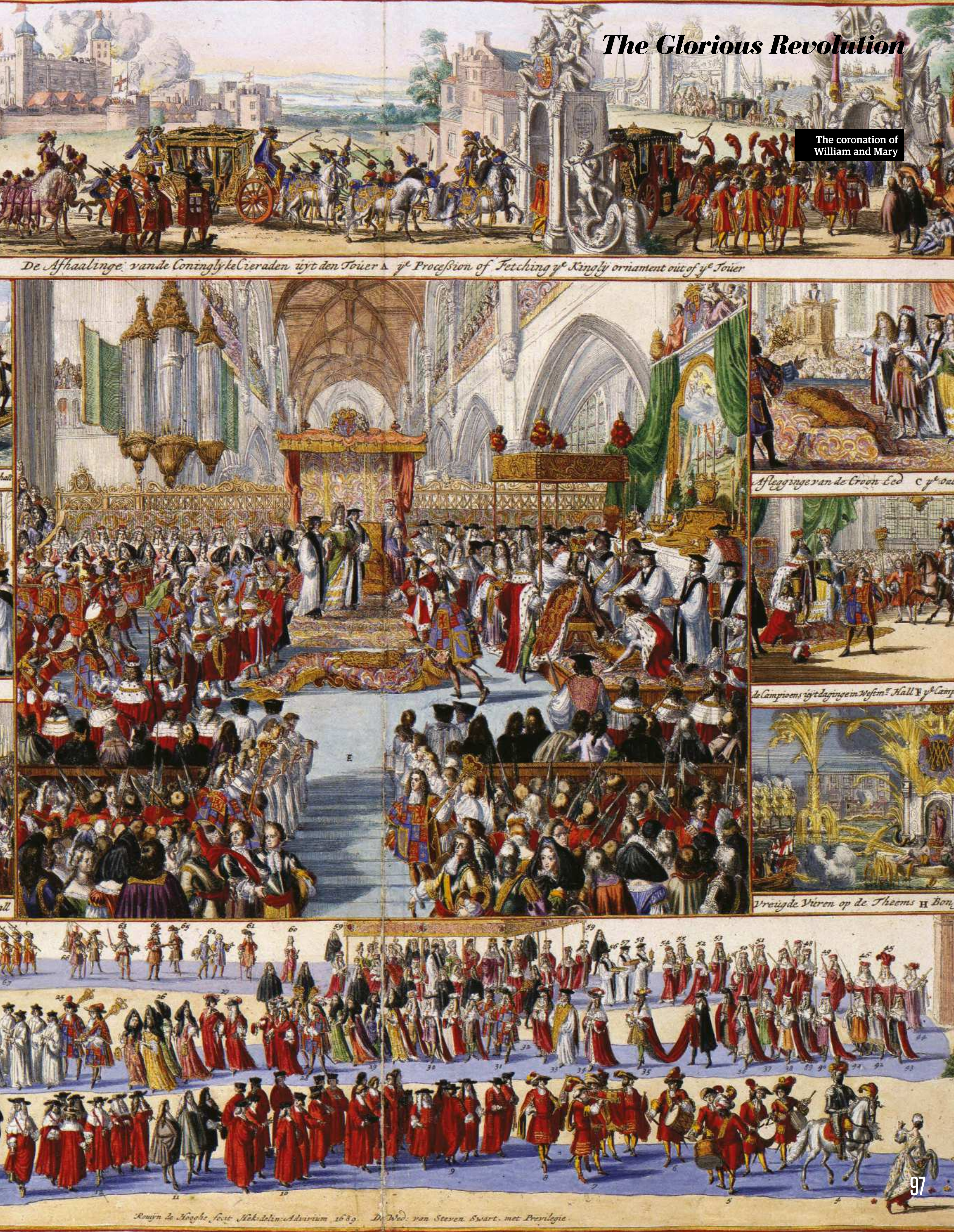
The fear was that there was a Catholic conspiracy afoot in the British Isles and throughout Europe that saw the church try to control both church and state. This plot would see the British Isles come under the sway of powerful Catholic nations like France, which wielded terrifying power and influence in this period. Incidents like the foiled Gunpowder plot in 1605 and the fake 'Popish plot' between 1678 and 1681 did much to stoke the flames of worry. To make matters worse, Charles II left no legitimate heir behind him and his openly Catholic brother was now heir to the throne. The Exclusion Crisis saw Whig politicians call for James to be excluded from the line of succession due to his religious beliefs, but this was opposed by the Tory MPs. To solve the issue Charles dissolved Parliament and after his death in 1685 James took the throne.

His early reign and support were gradually eroded when Charles II's illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth, made a bid for the throne. Although Monmouth was defeated after a few months, the monarch's popularity fell as he repealed bans on Catholics occupying public office and provoked mistrust of the standing army by creating and promoting Catholic officers. During this time James also tried to convert his daughter to Catholicism but she staunchly refused, supporting her new husband in his wars against France in blatant disregard of James' political leanings.

It would be James' son-in-law who would eventually orchestrate his downfall. Prince William was a member of the House of Orange and descended from William the Silent who had pushed the Catholic Spanish out of the Netherlands to form an independent and Protestant Dutch Republic.

War was brewing in Europe with Louis XIV, the hugely powerful French King, at odds with William. The Prince of Orange feared that James would support his Catholic ally on the continent but was somewhat tempered by the fact his wife was next in line to the British throne. This all changed when James had a son. His new heir could be raised as a Catholic and push Mary aside in the line of

B their Majties King Barge to Westminster
D ye Anoitment
G Kingly Banquet in Westminster


De Afhaalinge vande Coningly ke Cieraden uyt den Touer A ye Procession of Fetching ye Kingly ornament out of ye Touer
Afleggingevan de Croon Eed C ye Oa
E
de Campioens uytdaginge in Westmr. Hall F ye Camp
Vreugde Viren op de Theems H Bon
Romyn de Hooghe fecit Mek:delin: Advivium 1689. De Wed: van Steven Swart. met Previlegie

The coronation of William and Mary

France and England versus the world

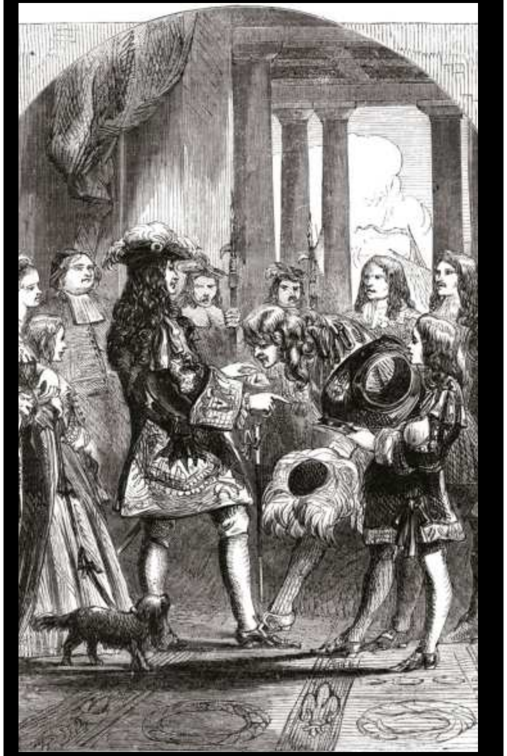
How the Sun King's superpower spelled ruin for the Stuart throne

Religion and politics were almost inseparable during the 17th century, with the main dividing line being between Catholic and Protestant nations. James II, being an openly practising Catholic, was drawn to an alliance with the French king Louis XIV, also known as the Sun King.

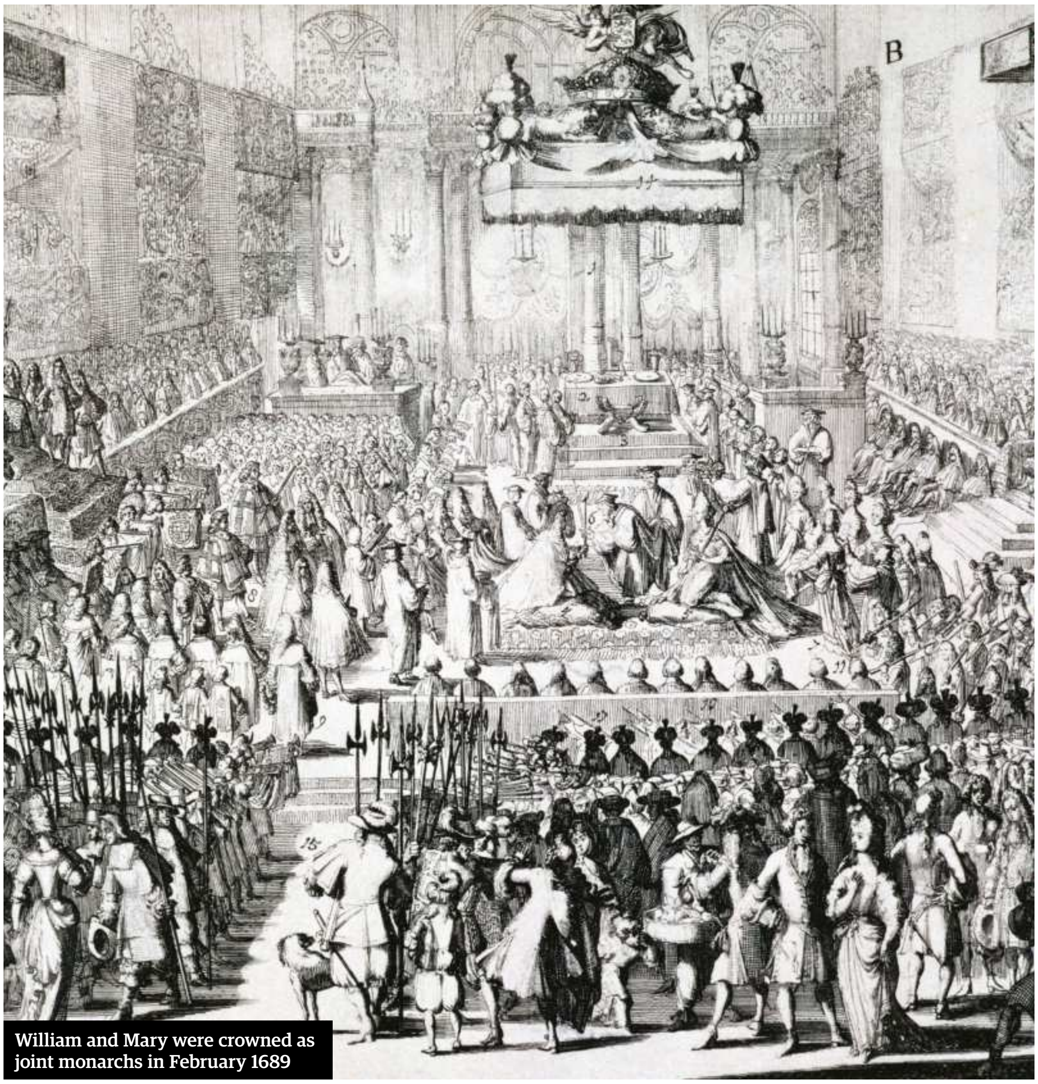
This immensely powerful monarch, while a formidable ally, was at war with most of Europe and the League of Augsburg, an alliance between the Holy Roman Empire, Spain and the Dutch Republic formed in the spirit of mutual defence against him. The French threatened the Electorate of the Palatinate, and soon Louis' forces were tied up fighting the Austrian Emperor Leopold I.

This alliance would cause James' downfall as the French army had pulled back from the Dutch border, leaving WIlliam free to marshal his forces towards England, safe in the knowledge that he would not be threatened from Europe. However, Louis did not sit idly by once William had taken the throne and plunged Europe into the Nine Years' War.

Supporting the exiled James with his military campaign in Ireland, France also took on the Grand Alliance, which were joined by England, now a Protestant nation, and many German and Italian principalities. With around 100,000 people dead and both sides struggling to make any meaningful gains, a peace accord was finally signed in September 1697 at Ryswick in the Dutch Republic.



James' and Louis' friendship and alliance would lead to the former losing his throne



William and Mary were crowned as joint monarchs in February 1689

"William demanded leading figures in England extend an invitation in an attempt to legitimise his bid for the throne"

succession, meaning more support for France and seeing William's position in Europe balance on a knife edge. Mary actually thought that the birth of James' son was a hoax engineered to take her inheritance away. Whether William also believed this is not known, but he understood that he would need to act if his and his Duchy's future were to be secured.

William decided to take matters into his own hands and make for London to oust James and occupy the country. A foreign invader taking the crown by force would not have gained him much support from the population, so William demanded that leading figures in England extend an invitation to him in an attempt to legitimise his bid for the throne. Seven men extended the hand of friendship to William, namely the earls of Shrewsbury, Devonshire and Danby, Viscount Lumley, the bishop of London, a man named Edward Russell and the author of the letter, Henry Sydney. These men, known as the Immortal Seven, were mostly Whigs who believed in parliamentary power, and two Tories who believed in the divine right of kings to rule. Their plea was simple enough: deliver the country from a Catholic tyrant. "We have great reason to believe we shall be every day in a worse condition than we are, and less able to defend ourselves… As to the first, the people are so generally dissatisfied with the present conduct of the government in relation to their religion, liberties and properties (all which have been greatly invaded), and they are in such expectation of their prospects being daily worse, that your Highness may be assured there are nineteen parts of twenty of the people throughout the kingdom who are desirous of a change."

Confident of the population's support, and with a propaganda piece now in place, William sailed from the continent with a massive army, four times the size of the Spanish Armada.

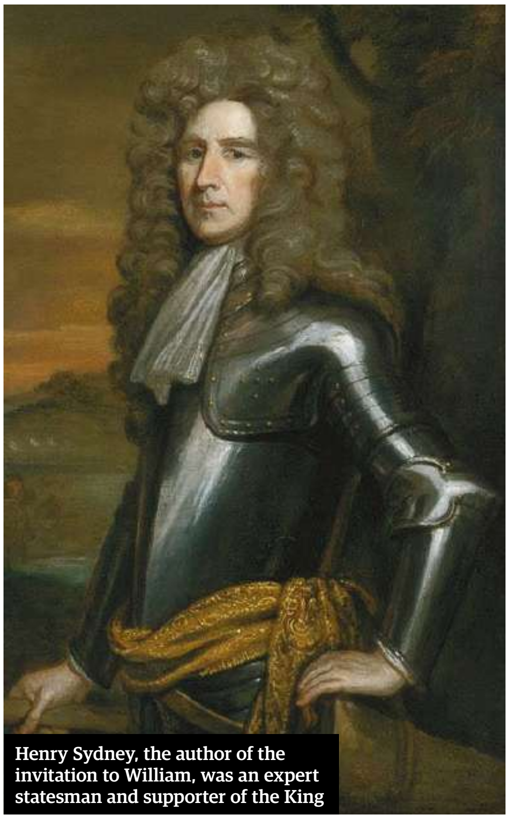
His unchallenged landing at Torbay on 5 November 1688 was largely due to the weather being in his favour. It would later be known as the 'Protestant wind', as it meant that James could not contest the landings with his own navy. By coincidence or design, the date of his landing fell on the day the Gunpowder Plot was foiled, another time when a Catholic scheme was thwarted.

James would not take the news of William's landing well. Already in poor health, the king was now beset by nosebleeds and rampant indecision. His nerves got so bad that instead of giving battle to William at Salisbury and stopping the invasion, he retreated back to London, convinced of his own defeat before a blow was struck.

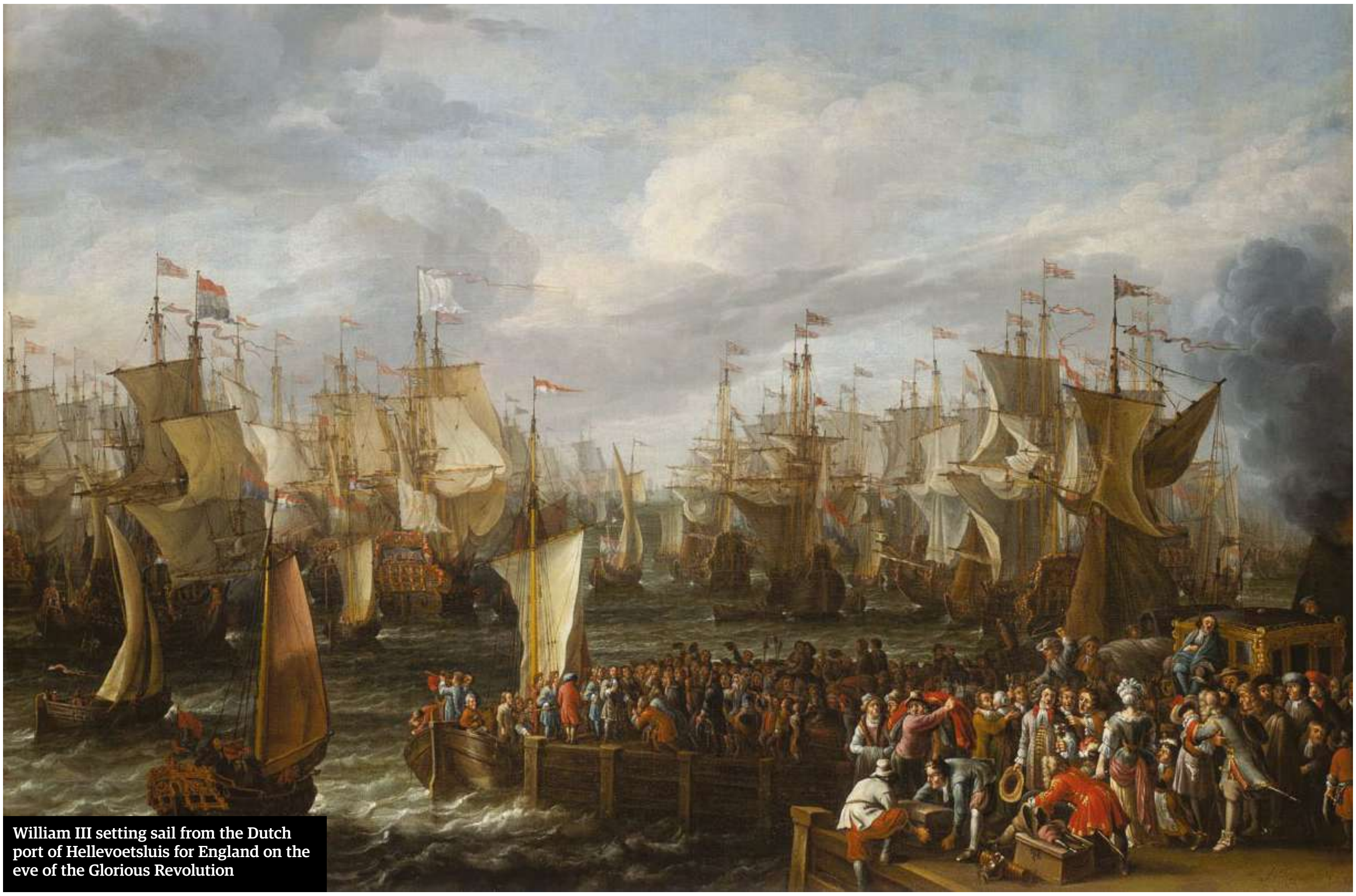
The presence of William and his army in southern England had seen a string of anti-Catholic riots spring up around the country. Coupled with massive desertions from the royalists to the Orangist camp – including the king's own daughter Princess Anne – this convinced James that he should flee the country. His attempt to get to France was thwarted by Kentish fishermen who were on the lookout for papists and returned him to London. A second escape attempt was carried out and William, needing rid of James but unwilling to kill his father-in-law, let him escape so he could consolidate his own rule.

A problem now faced both William and the country: Parliament could only be called by the king and he was now in France. Instead, William called a Convention of the Lords and MPs in January 1689. With William's army one of the only things holding the country together, he was able to exert pressure on the council to secure himself and his wife as joint rulers. There was considerable argument as to whether James had abdicated or just temporarily abandoned the throne in his flight from the capital. The latter would have seen a regency set up rather than a new monarch crowned. William, backed by 25,000 men, forced his will through and also stopped a bid to have Mary instated as queen and himself reduced to a consort role.

On 13 February 1689 William and Mary both ascended the throne and ruled as joint monarchs, but not before they were read the Declaration of Rights. This document, while not a condition for them taking the crowns, is now enshrined in British law as the Bill of Rights. The bill ended the threat of an absolute monarchy, gave the population some rights, called for more frequent Parliaments and the need for free speech. Even today the document is seen as a landmark in the development of civil liberties and helped inspire similar documents such as the US Constitution.

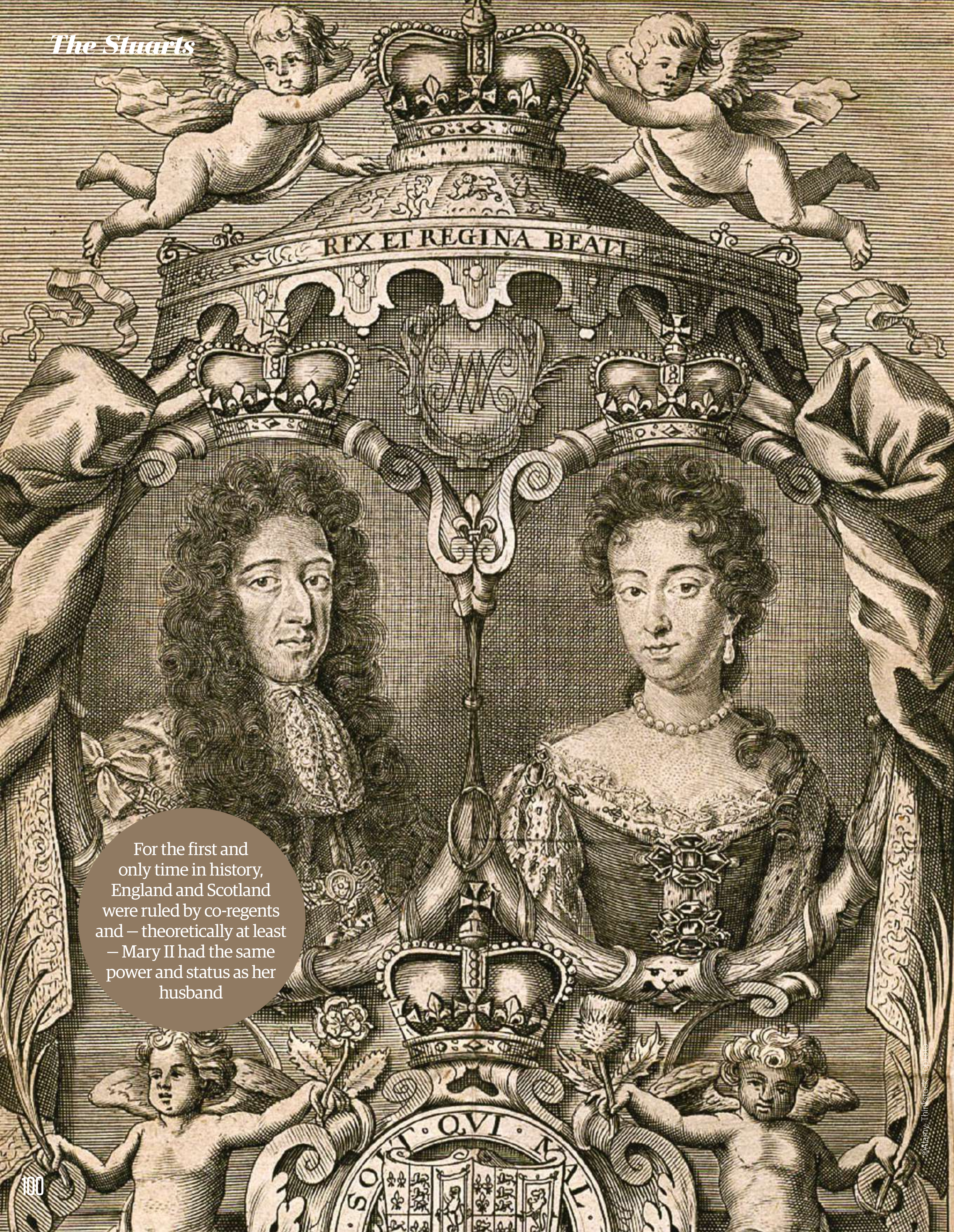


Henry Sydney, the author of the invitation to William, was an expert statesman and supporter of the King



William III setting sail from the Dutch port of Hellevoetsluis for England on the eve of the Glorious Revolution

©Getty Images


REX ET REGINA BEATI
SOIT QVI MAL

For the first and only time in history, England and Scotland were ruled by co-regents and — theoretically at least — Mary II had the same power and status as her husband

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INTRODUCING

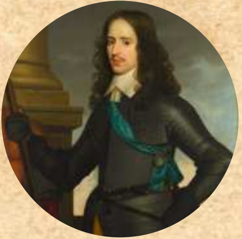
William III and Mary II

Step inside the fascinating court of England's first constitutional monarchs

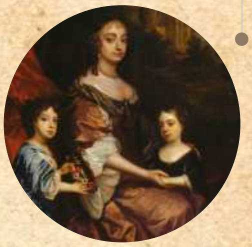
Timeline

1650

Death of William's father
William III's father William II, the stadtholder and Prince of Orange, dies of smallpox just eight days before he is born. His quasi-monarchical realm, a melting pot of Early Modern commerce, trade and ideas, is now partly in the hands of his unborn child.
6 November 1650



An orange prince
In Binnenhof Palace, The Hague, William, Prince of Orange and Count of Nassau is born to Prince William II of Orange and Mary, Princess Royal, eldest daughter of Charles I.
14 November 1650



A queen is born
At St James' Palace, Princess Mary of York is born to James, Duke of York (the future James II) and his first wife Anne Hyde.
30 April 1662

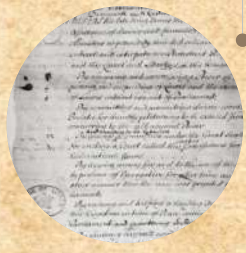
First encounter
William III and Mary II meet for the first time in 1670-71 when William comes to visit to arrange a marriage to the second in line to the throne. Mary's father James, a Catholic, is not impressed by a betrothal to a staunch Protestant, but he is eventually overruled by his brother Charles II.
1670-71

Stadtholder
William's right to become Stadtholder, or Steward of the Netherlands is not automatic. The less extravagant, valmost republican nature of the role influenced his royal style in England.
2-3 July 1672

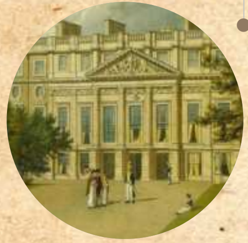
Marrying 'Caliban'
Mary's marriage to William III is arranged and takes place in her bedchamber. She is particularly apprehensive about marrying an older, gruff-looking man who is more than ten years her senior, something her sister Anne teases her about, calling William 'Caliban', the feral beast from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.
4 November 1677

Fight or flight?
After decades of rumours about his Catholicism and numerous attempts to remove him — both by parliamentary means during the Exclusion Crisis and on the battlefield during the Monmouth Rebellion — James II is finally forced to flee. Mary is invited to become queen.
1685-1688

TURN TO PAGE 102



The Bill of Rights
In the Banqueting Hall at Whitehall, where Charles I had been executed for tyranny against his own people and his son Charles II had held a lavish banquet on his return to the throne, William III and Mary II agrees to uphold the stipulations of the Bill of Rights, the cornerstone of constitutional monarchy.
1689



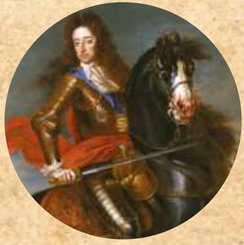
Hampton reborn
William III invites Sir Christopher Wren, arguably England's greatest architect and responsible for re-building St Paul's Cathedral, to remodel and expand parts of Hampton Court.
1689-1700

Whigs and Tories
The 1690s saw more organised political parties, as the Bill of Rights afforded Parliament more autonomy. Mary's sister Anne has to lobby Parliament to gain a personal allowance.
1690s

The Battle of the Boyne
Just two years after he had been deposed, the former James II raises an army in Ireland across the River Boyne in an attempt to win back his crown. William III leaves Mary II to govern on her own while he successfully puts the down the rebellion, ensuring James never returns.
July 1690

Banking on success
During the later half of William III and Mary II's reign, the Bank of England is created. Granted a royal charter, it is modelled on the Bank of Amsterdam. founded in 1609.
1694

Death of Mary II
Like her father-in-law, Mary II dies of smallpox in the early hours at Kensington Palace, aged 32, after being ill for a week. Her premature death at such a young age is capitalised on by Jacobites who are quick to suggest it was divine punishment for taking her father's throne.
28 December 1694



1702

Death of William III
William dies of pulmonary fever (a complication resulting from an injury following a fall from his horse) at the age of 51 at Kensington Palace. He is buried on 12 April at Westminster Abbey.
8 March 1702

The turmoil of Queen Mary

Discover the tale of the reluctant queen who was torn between her duty to her father, her husband and to her country

Daughter, wife, queen: Mary II was all of these – but while they were a source of happiness, they also caused great confusion. Mary is often left in the shadow of her husband, King William III, and their unusual rise to the throne. Now it is time to consider not only Mary's role in the joint monarchy, but also her life as a woman torn between those she loved most.

Mary was born at St James' Palace on 30 April 1662. Along with her sister, Anne, Mary had an unconventional relationship with her father, James, Duke of York. While most royal children spent little time with their parents, Mary and Anne saw their father often and regularly sat with him at his dining table. As her father's favourite, Mary was close to him and they played together often – a stark contrast to her relationship with her cold and distant mother, Anne Hyde.

Growing up during the reign of her uncle Charles II, Mary's future was in his hands. Aged 15, she discovered that she was going to marry her first cousin William, Prince of Orange, a rather unattractive man. The young princess wept for a day and a half while her father was left deeply upset, unable to change a thing.

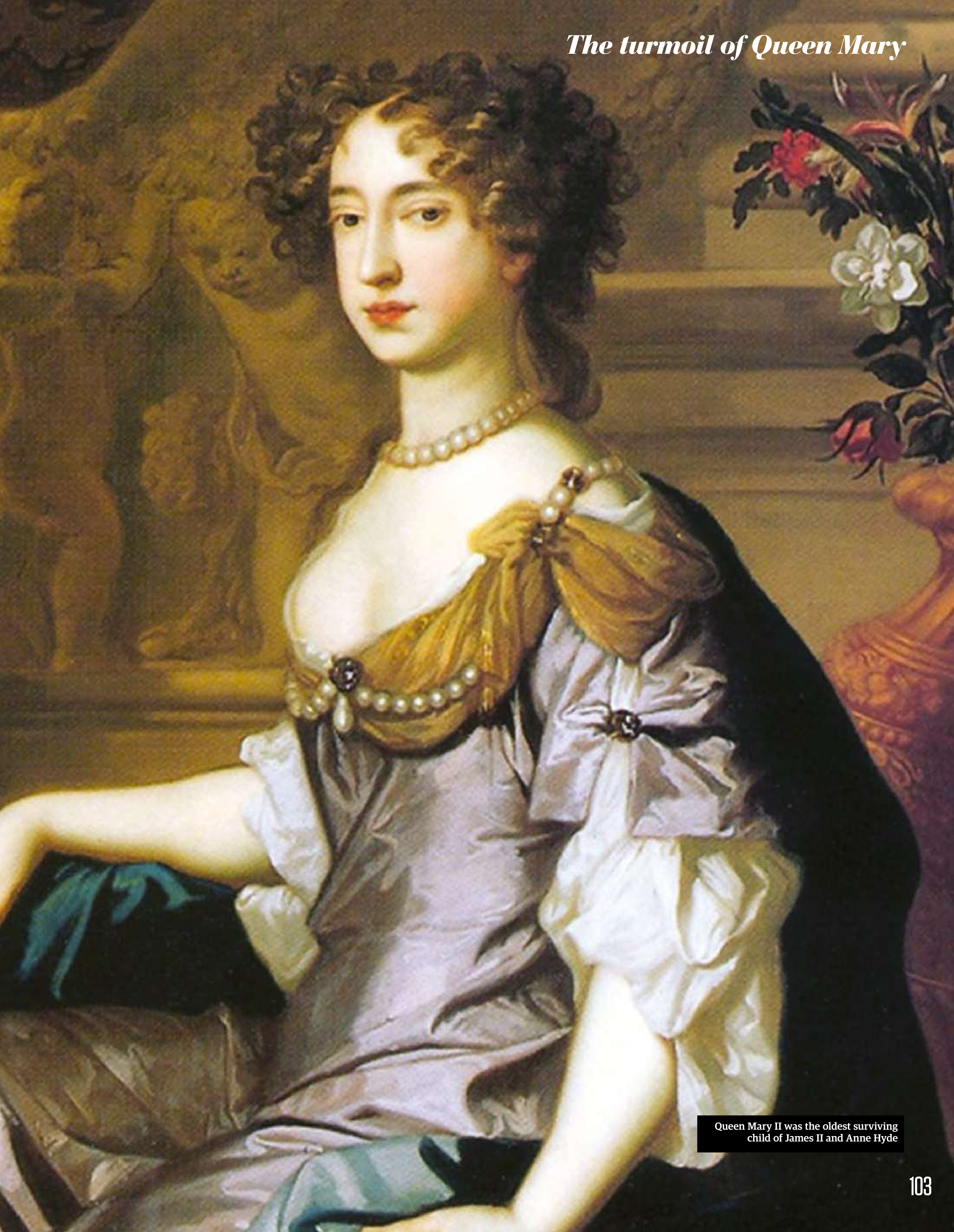
Although devastated at having to move to the Dutch Republic, Mary created a very happy life there. She adored the countryside and the clean air it offered – something that was severely lacking in damp, dreary London. The princess fell in love with the Dutch people, who in turn came to adore her.

The royal court of William and Mary was far removed from the pomp and ceremony that could be seen in England and France. The couple valued their privacy, keeping their court small and close, and Mary filled her days with domestic pursuits. She fell pregnant within the first year of marriage but had a heartbreaking and traumatic miscarriage. Though Mary would never be able have children, her relationship with William eventually blossomed into one of love and affection.

The blissful life that Mary had developed was soon to be shattered. After the death of her uncle in 1685, her father ascended to the throne as James II. He pursued policies designed to renew Catholicism in England with zeal, causing increasing friction with Parliament. Although an Anglican herself, Mary did not involve herself with the issues of her father, just as William decided to sit and watch as the events unfolded. The game changed, however, when it was announced that James' queen, Mary of Modena, was pregnant.

Up until this point, Mary had been her father's heir presumptive to the English throne – a role that, quite honestly, she did not desire. The unborn baby presented an entirely new problem. What if it turned out to be a boy? Not only would a baby boy displace Mary in the line of succession, but he would undoubtedly be raised as a Catholic, a disaster in the making considering the religious tension in England.

So great was the unrest regarding the unborn child that whispers began to spread about a Popish Plot – if the baby turned out to be a girl, it would be secretly replaced with a boy. The conviction of these rumours was so strong that Princess Anne wholly believed them and in kind she influenced Mary to believe them, too.



Queen Mary II was the oldest surviving child of James II and Anne Hyde

"The joint monarchy was seen as the only solution to a rather unique problem"

When the English queen gave birth to a baby boy in June 1688, the worst fears of the Protestants were realised. It was also clear that everybody doubted the legitimacy of the baby, thanks to the gossip that had dominated the court since the pregnancy was announced. Now that the religious future of the country was at stake, Mary found herself in a predicament.

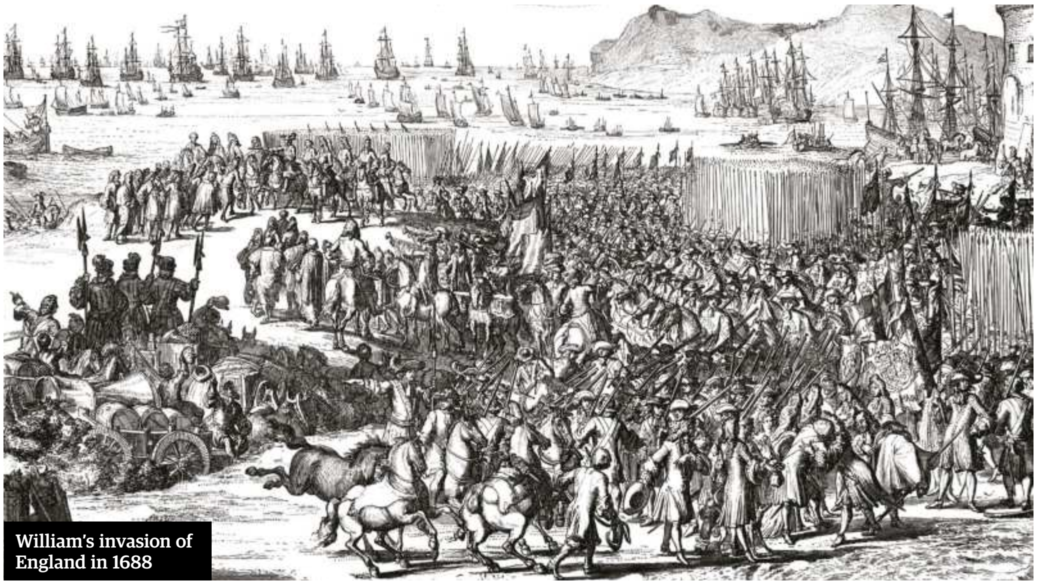
Months of covert negotiations between English Politicians and her husband had reached fever pitch, although William explicitly refused to invade England without an 'invitation' to do so. The petition duly arrived, signed by the seven leading English Protestants who have since gone down in history as the 'immortal seven'. The time had come to remove Mary's beloved father from the throne.

Not knowing how William's invasion of England would pan out, Mary was concerned for both her husband and her father. When William and his large army arrived on English shores in November 1688, the majority of James' support evaporated, and towards the end of December he fled to France for his own safety.

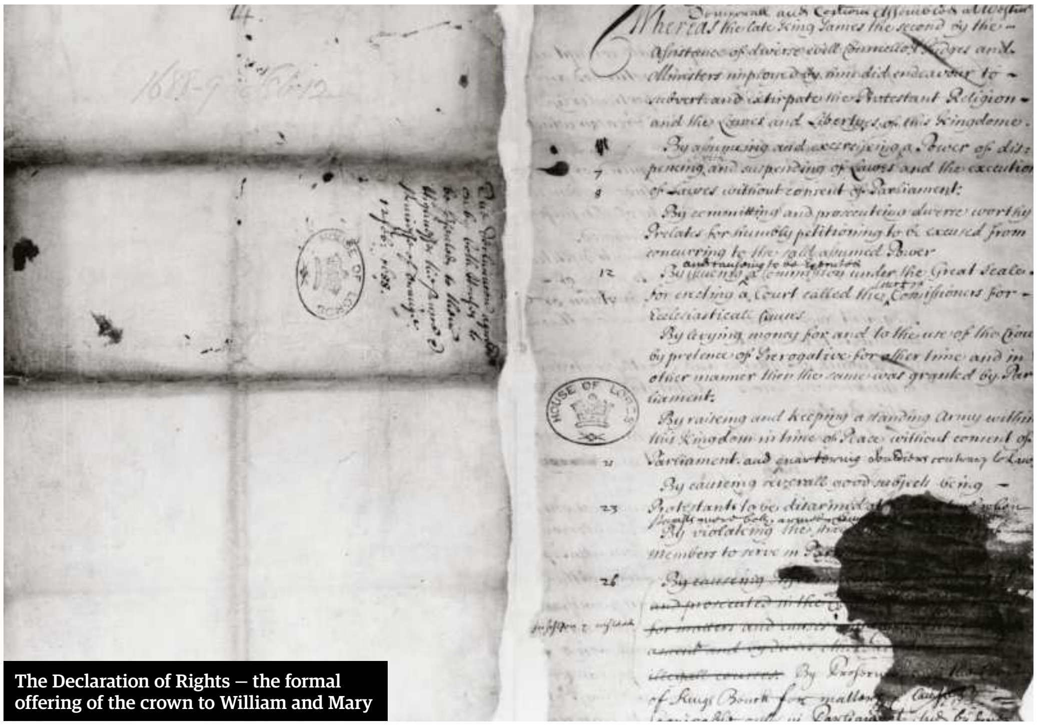
Mary soon joined William in their new kingdom, only to find him pale and exhausted. Mary was concerned for her husband's health, but he encouraged her to be jovial following their victory. As she always did, Mary did exactly as he asked and appeared happy for everyone to see. She wanted to show her support for her husband, but Mary's behaviour left her open to cruel and biting remarks that she cared nothing for her father, who they had deposed.

Of course, this could not have been further from the truth. Mary was stuck between a rock and a hard place. She loved William and supported his achievements but despaired for the father she adored, declaring, "I cannot forget my father and I grieve for his misfortune." Even when James had been on the throne, causing trouble with his Catholicism, Mary had maintained a regular correspondence with him. They may have had their religious differences but it did not affect their close relationship.

To Mary, James was not the monarch that everybody else saw, wreaking havoc among his people – he was her father, and she loved him dearly. However, the line was drawn in March 1689 when William and Mary were offered the English crown as joint sovereigns, with their coronation to be held just one month later. Now father and daughter were irrevocably on opposite sides, never to be reunited again.



William's invasion of England in 1688



[illegible] and Certaine Assemblies at Westm[illegible]
Whereas the late King James the second by the —
Assistance of diverse evill Councellors Judges and
Ministers imployed by him did endeavour to —
subvert and extirpate the Protestant Religion —
and the Lawes and Liberties of this Kingdome.
By assumeing and exerciseing a Power of dis-
7 pensing and suspending of Lawes and the execution
8 of Lawes without consent of Parliament:
By committing and prosecuting diverse worthy
Prelates for humbly petitioning to be excused from
concurring to the said assumed Power
and causing to be executed
12 By issueing a Commission under the Great Seale
for erecting a Court called the Court of Commissioners for
Ecclesiasticall Causes
By levying money for and to the use of the Crowne
by pretence of Prerogative for other time and in
other manner then the same was granted by Par-
liament.
By raising and keeping a standing Army within
this Kingdom in time of Peace without consent of
21 Parliament and quartering Souldiers contrary to Law
By causeing severall good subjects being
23 Protestants to be disarmed [illegible]
By violating the [illegible]
Members to serve in Pa[illegible]
26 ~~By causeing~~ [illegible]
~~and prosecuted in the~~ [illegible]
~~for matters and causes~~ [illegible]
[illegible]
~~illegall courses~~ By Prosecutions [illegible]
of Kings Bench for matters [illegible]

HOUSE OF LORDS

The Declaration of Rights – the formal offering of the crown to William and Mary

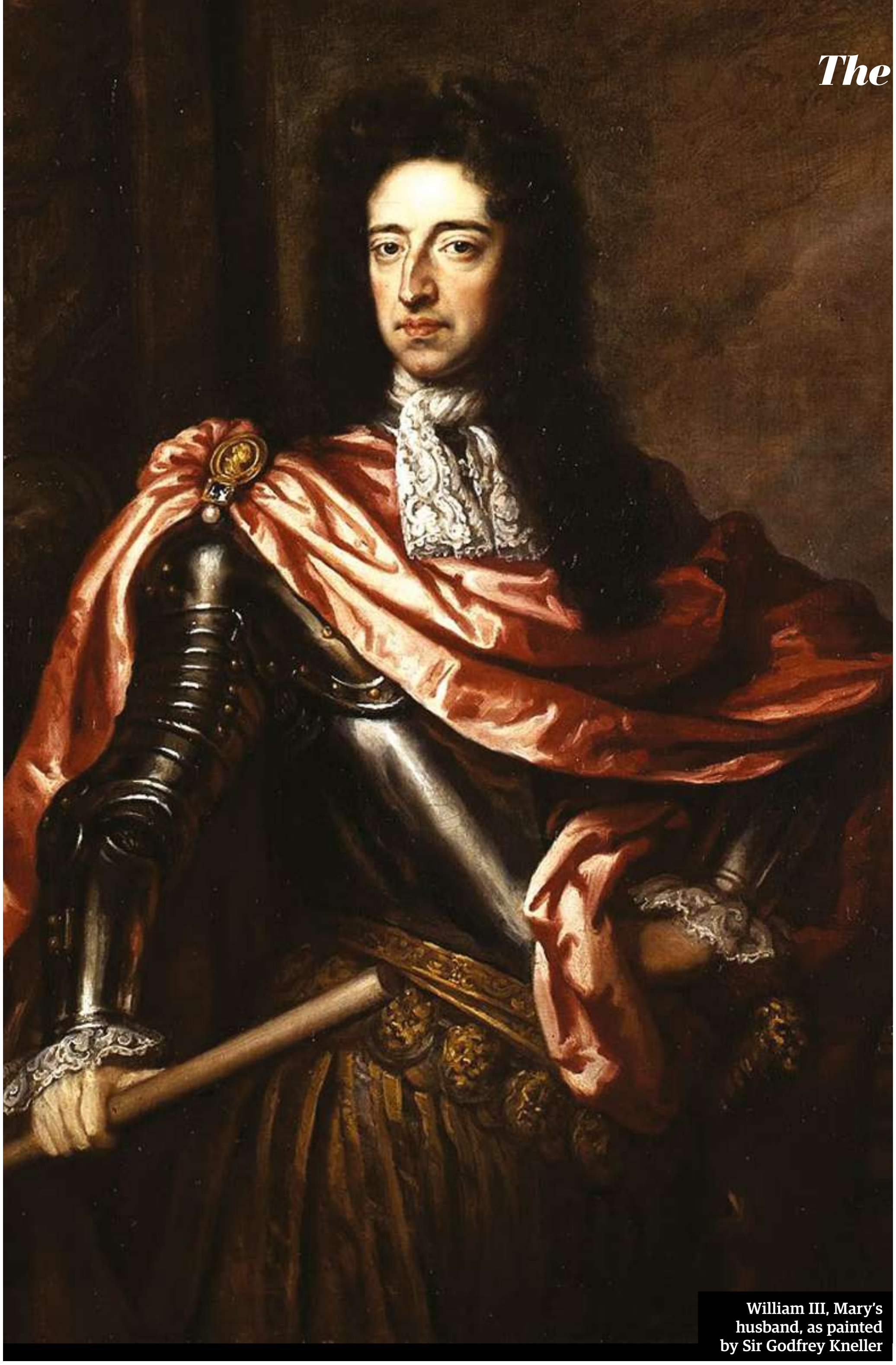
The joint monarchy was seen as the only solution to a rather unique problem. In theory, the crown should have passed directly to Mary as her new half-brother was considered to be illegitimate. Unfortunately for those who hoped for simplicity, Mary did not want to be a sole queen regnant. In her eyes it was wrong for her to assume a position that superseded that of her husband's and William didn't want to play second fiddle to his wife.

The two agreed that a joint monarchy was the best compromise, with William wielding the power while Mary's presence gave the appearance that the legitimate succession had been continued, despite the revolution.

Despite the success of their Glorious Revolution, William and Mary became desperately unhappy in England. She may have returned to her native country, but Mary was a stranger to the place she had once called home, having created a wholesome life for herself in the Dutch Republic.

She busied herself once again with domestic projects, such as the renovation of Hampton Court Palace, but it was clear that the queen longed to return to her quiet Dutch life. William, too, longed for the privacy of his old court, unused to the formality of the English one. He occupied himself with numerous military campaigns, leaving his queen to head up the regency council when he wasn't there.

Mary had no interest in politics or government but proved that she was a capable ruler in her husband's absence. She kept him informed about everything and followed his instructions, determined to do a good job on his behalf. The



William III, Mary's husband, as painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller

queen prided herself for being a devoted wife above all else, and there is no doubt that her support was vital to William.

Even in the small part he allowed her to play in terms of governance, Mary showed great skill. He left his wife to deal with ecclesiastical matters like policy and appointments as his Calvinism proved to be a source of contention with the Church. It was also Mary who returned the English court to a state of piety and respectability after the debauchery and chaos of the reigns of her uncle and father. Mary had the potential to be a great queen – but her quest as a wife was far greater.

It is no wonder that William was beside himself when Mary fell ill with smallpox on 20 December 1694. Aware of just how ill she was, Mary arranged all of her papers and destroyed those that she wanted to remain a secret. Her husband demanded that a camp bed be placed in her room and he stayed by her side, too scared to leave her.

There was a brief respite when Mary appeared to improve and that perhaps she did not have the dreaded smallpox. It was a false sense of security, though, as the queen took a turn for the worse. She said farewell to her beloved William and died in the early hours of 29 December.

At just 32 years old, Mary's death left those around her heartbroken. The people of both England and the Dutch Republic wept for the queen they loved. William was inconsolable and would break down in tears at the mention of her name even months after her passing. He would continue to rule England alone for the next seven years, never to remarry.

An illicit love?

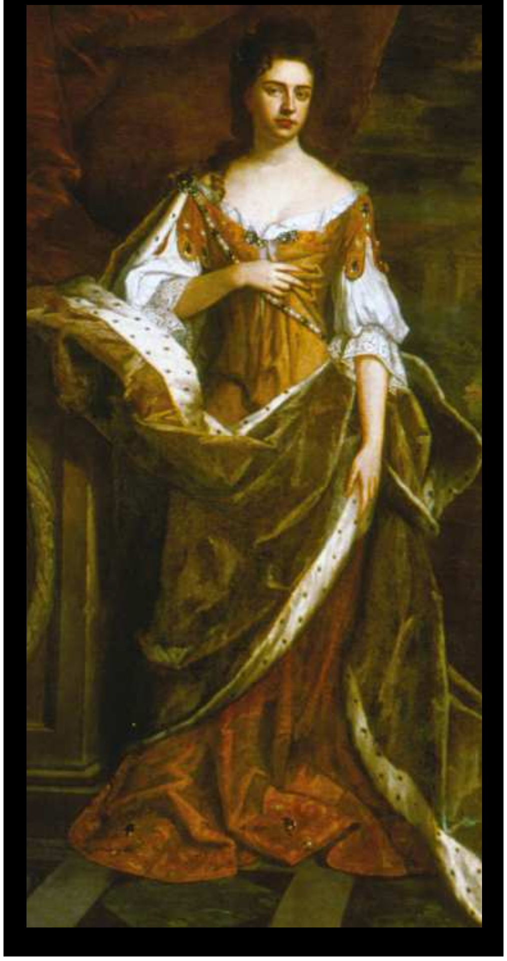
How the letters of a young Princess Mary have brought her sexuality into question

Before William, there was Frances. Frances Apsley, a female courtier, found herself the object of Mary's affection, when the queen was just a 13-year-old princess. Mary wrote over 80 passionate letters to Frances in which she referred to her as her "dearest, dear husband", along with numerous other romantic sentiments. So can these letters be used as evidence of Mary's homosexuality?

Considering how fervently Mary would fall for her husband later in life, it would appear not. Instead, it has been suggested that Mary's rather extreme feelings towards Frances were because of how much she idolised her. The princess did not have a close relationship with her mother, who failed to show her any love and affection, and Frances, nine years Mary's senior, was a sort of substitute for this.

Since Frances' letters no longer exist, it is difficult to fully understand the correspondence between the two girls. We know that it initially continued after Mary's marriage but soon cooled when Frances married herself, with no evidence of the relationship continuing after Mary's accession.

Frances also maintained similar correspondence with Princess Anne, something that Mary expressed jealously over in her letters. It is interesting to note that Anne's sexuality and relationship with Sarah Churchill would also be called into question during her reign. However, it is clear that regardless of her sexuality, Mary was a woman who loved with all of her heart.



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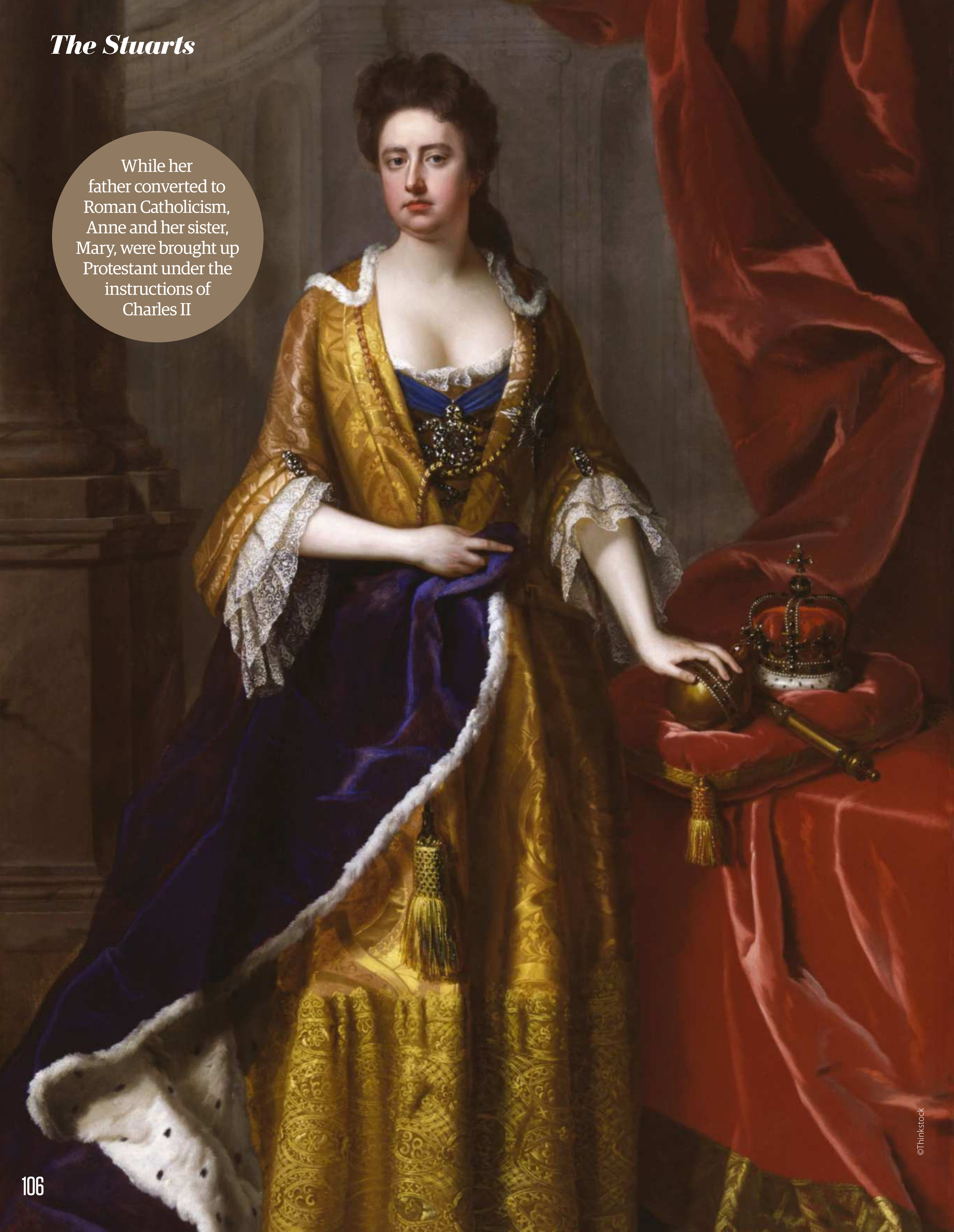

While her father converted to Roman Catholicism, Anne and her sister, Mary, were brought up Protestant under the instructions of Charles II

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INTRODUCING

Queen Anne

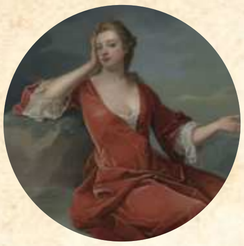
The life of the last Stuart monarch and the first ruler of a newly united Great Britain

Timeline

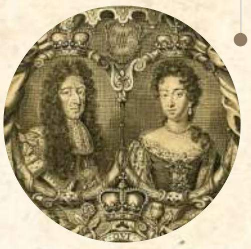
1665

Birth of a princess
Anne is born at St James' Palace, the fourth child of the future James II and his first wife Anne Hyde. She will be raised an Anglican.
6 February 1665

Anne meets Sarah
The young Princess Anne meets and befriends Sarah Jennings, later Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough, who would become her lifelong friend and confidant.
1675

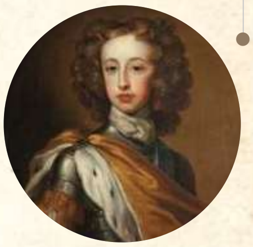


First comes marriage
The future queen marries George of Denmark in an arranged union. The young couple fall in love and move to the Palace of Whitehall.
28 July 1683



Next in line
In possibly the most peaceful invasion in history, Anne's sister Mary and her husband William of Orange sail from the Dutch Republic and take the thrones of England, Scotland and Ireland. Unless they have any children, Anne is now next in line for the crown.
1688

Illicit friendship
Anne's sister, now Queen Mary, demands she cut ties with the Duchess of Marlborough. Anne refuses and the sisters' relationship remains fractitious.
Early 1689



A son is born
Despite many stillbirths, Anne gives birth to a son, William. Unfortunately, though he lives the longest of all Anne's children, he dies 11 years later.
24 July 1689

Heir to the throne
Anne's sister, Mary, dies and leaves no heirs, making Anne the unexpected heir to the thrones of England, Scotland and Ireland.
28 December 1694

Ensuring the succession
Following the death of Anne's longest-living child, Parliament begins to worry about the throne passing to a Catholic. They pass the Act of Settlement, ensuring the crown will always pass to the next Protestant in line.
June 1701

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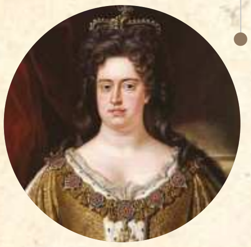
War of the Spanish Succession
After the death of Charles II of Spain, Europe goes to war over who should be on the throne. England sides with Austria and the Dutch Republic.
1701–14



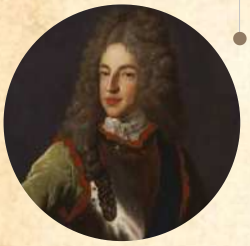
Long live the queen
After the death of William III, Anne ascends to the thrones of England, Scotland and Ireland. She is popular with her subjects and wins everyone over soon after she becomes queen by distancing herself from her late Dutch brother-in-law and emphasising the fact that she is an English queen on the English throne.
8 March 1702

The coronation
Less than two months after taking the throne, Queen Anne's coronation is held at Westminster Abbey. Unable to walk, she is carried in a sedan chair.
28 April 1702

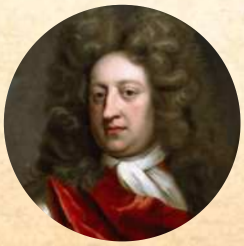
Blenheim
John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, defeats the French at Blenheim in Bavaria. Anne rewards him by giving him money to buy land and build a house, which becomes Blenheim Palace.
13 August 1704

A united kingdom
Following the Act of Union, England and Scotland are joined together and become Great Britain, making Anne the first queen of Great Britain and Ireland. Anne had long been an advocate of joining England and Scotland, despite opposition on both sides of the border.
1 May 1707

Jacobite uprising
James Francis Edward Stuart and his French allies try to land on the Scottish coast to incite an uprising against Anne's rule. However, bad weather and the Royal Navy manage to foil their plans and the Jacobites don't try any more schemes until George I is on the throne in 1715.
1708



All alone
George of Denmark dies aged 55, leaving his wife Queen Anne absolutely devastated. She never remarries.
October 1708



Fall from grace
Exhausted by her friend's meddling, Anne strips Sarah of her offices. Sarah leaves England in disgrace and goes on to travel Europe.
January 1711

Waiting for the Hanovers
The Treaty of Utrecht ends the War of the Spanish Succession and sees France finally recognise the future Hanoverian succession in England.
April 1713

1714

End of an era
Two days after suffering a stroke, Queen Anne dies in Kensington Palace. As per the Act of Settlement of 1701, her nearest Protestant relation, George, Elector of Hanover, takes the British crown and becomes King George I, heralding the start of the Georgian era.
1 August 1714

The politics of Stuart Britain

How Queen Anne attempted to mediate the precarious political situation that dominated her reign

History has been unkind to the reign of Queen Anne of Great Britain – painted as a weak-willed and feeble monarch, the story of Anne's life does as much to highlight her personal tragedies as it does to overshadow the many achievements of her rule.

During Anne's 12 years on the throne, she was impacted by the contentious political situation that grew between the rival Whig and Tory parties as they fought for dominance within Parliament. So how successfully did she deal the rivalry that threatened to destabilise the English government?

Politically speaking, Anne's sympathies lay with the Tories, who were staunch supporters of the monarchy and the Church of England. As a proud Anglican, the queen saw them as her natural allies within Parliament. Despite their loyalty to the Church, the Tories had vehemently opposed the successive Exclusion Bills that appeared between 1679 and 1681 in an attempt to exclude Anne's Catholic father, the future James II, from the throne. In their eyes, upholding the legitimate succession was a matter of the utmost importance.

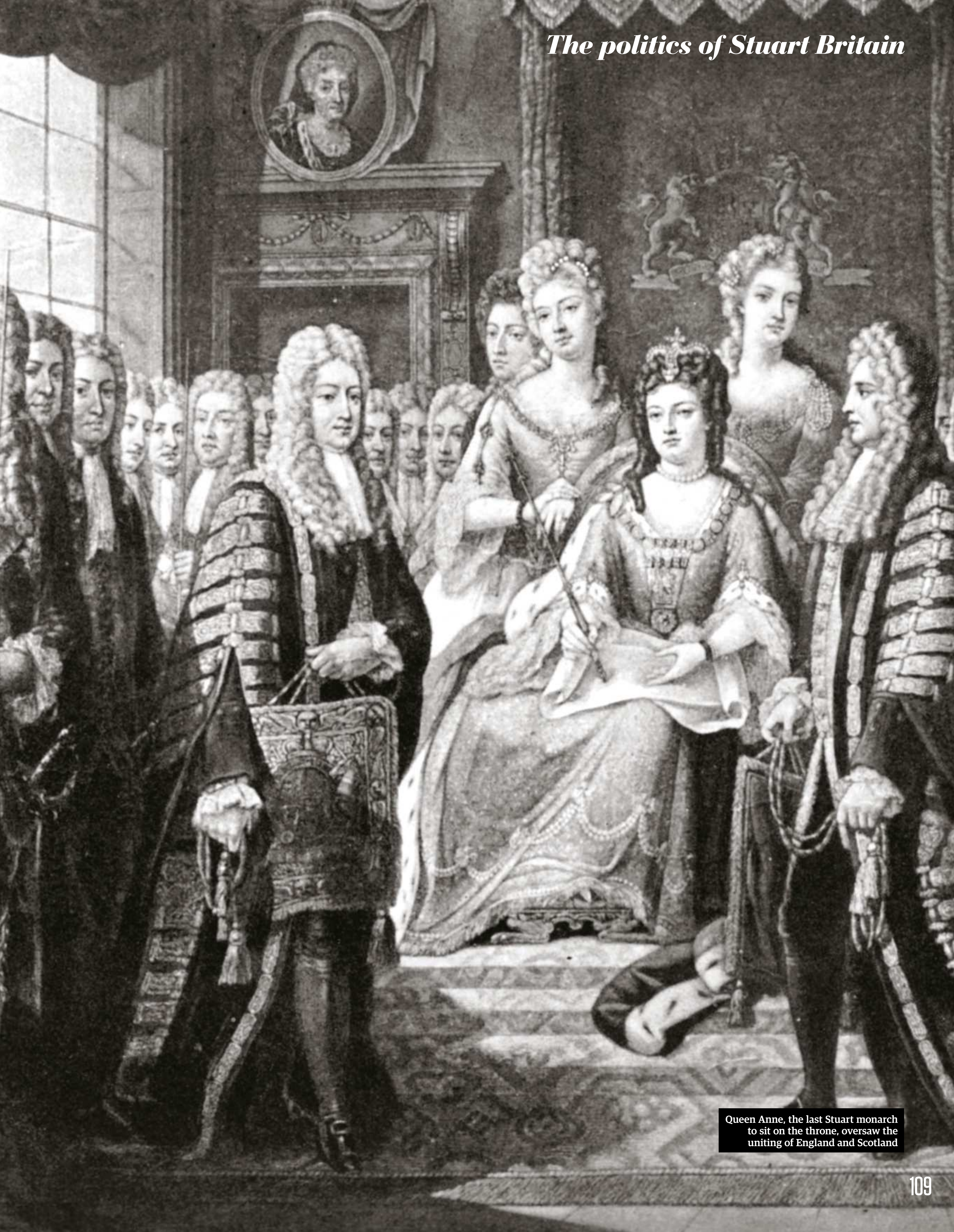
Consequently, the Whig party developed as challengers to the Tory stance on the succession. They earned the ire and distrust of the queen thanks to their opposition of monarchical authority and their support for Protestant dissenters. Although the Exclusion Bills ultimately failed, they did mark the start of the two-party political system that would hold an iron grip on the government during Anne's reign.

At the very centre of this political mess was Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough. Her intimate relationship with Anne sparked salacious rumours that the two women were lovers, with the duchess' influence over the queen clear for all to see. There is no doubt that the rise of Sarah's husband, the duke of Marlborough, and their friend, the earl of Godolphin, within the government was a result of this close friendship as much as it was for their own accomplishments. The correlation is also evident through the eventual downfalls of both Marlborough and Godolphin, which mirrored the deterioration of Anne's relationship with Sarah.

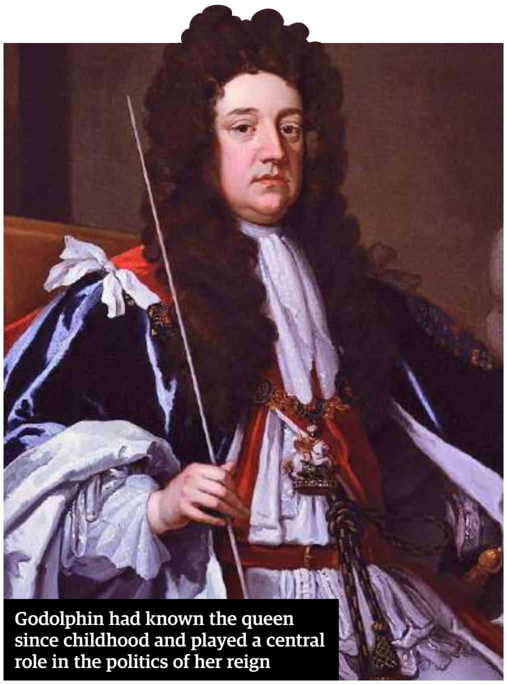
Of course, these well-known personal allegiances caused the queen to come under frequent suspicion that those around her were influencing her decisions, particularly in terms of her political appointments. It was the monarch's prerogative to handle appointments to their government and it was a responsibility that Anne took seriously. There is no denying that her first parliament was full of Tories, with Godolphin leading the pack as lord treasurer. In addition to this, with the appointment of Marlborough as captain-general of the queen's armies it would seem that Anne's critics were right to be wary – however, to argue that she desired a fervent Tory government is a step too far.

Queen Anne knew how to separate her personal life from her political duty. She believed in her right to choose her ministers, even though her hand was forced under certain circumstances, and she wanted a moderate government with no extremism from either side.

Although they were Tories, Godolphin and Marlborough were both moderate and more loyal to the crown than their own party. They made an effective team alongside Robert Harley, speaker of the House, and the queen felt that she was able



Queen Anne, the last Stuart monarch to sit on the throne, oversaw the uniting of England and Scotland



Godolphin had known the queen since childhood and played a central role in the politics of her reign

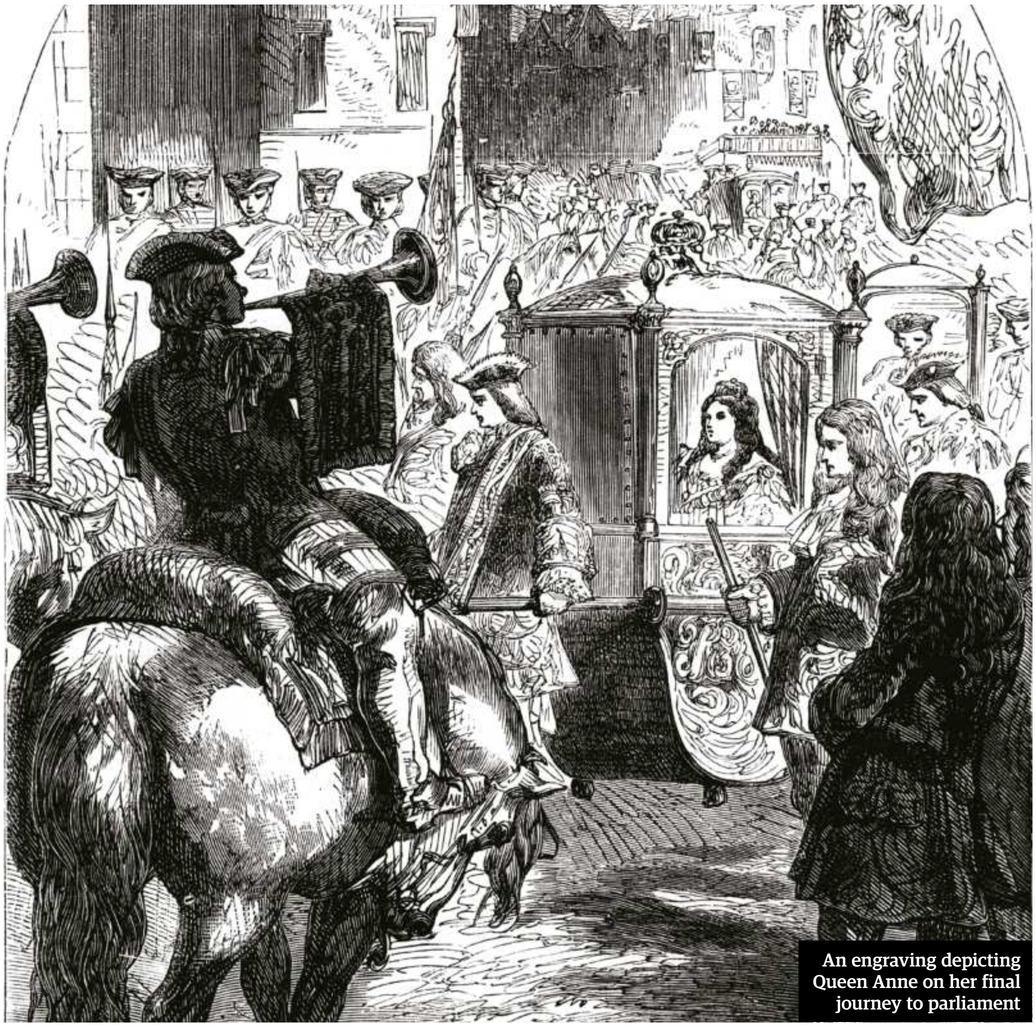
to trust them. The problem was that the general election following Anne's accession saw a landslide for the Tories, many of whom were 'high Tories' – in other words, they were hardcore traditionalists and they were determined to undermine the Whigs at every turn, most notably with the Occasional Conformity Bill of 1702.

One of the biggest causes for contention between the Tories and the Whigs was the English involvement in the War of the Spanish Succession. While the Tories opposed the conflict as a waste of resources, the Whigs supported it. For Marlborough, who was abroad leading the army, the opposition of his own party caused major problems.

Along with Godolphin, the two men began to increasingly turn to the Whigs for support with the war effort. It turned out to be a wise decision – Marlborough's victory against the French at the Battle of Blenheim in 1704 was arguably the crowning glory of Anne's reign and led to widespread celebrations across the country. As a reward, Anne commissioned the building of Blenheim Palace for her victorious captain-general.

However, the battle also contributed towards the change in the balance of power from the Tories to the Whigs. The queen became dismayed to see that Marlborough and Godolphin were increasingly relying on the support of the Whigs in Parliament as her distrust for the party had never waned.

Anne's relationship with Sarah, an ardent Whig, soon began to sour as their political differences began to reach fever pitch. Sarah was persistent, seizing every opportunity she could to hound the queen into changing her allegiance to the Whigs and Anne resented Sarah's intrusion – but the duchess didn't care, for she continued to blatantly berate the queen for her Tory sympathies. To her, the Tories were nothing more than Jacobites, ready and waiting to restore the Catholic line to the throne. Rather than achieve her aim, all Sarah did was to widen the distance between herself



An engraving depicting Queen Anne on her final journey to parliament

Bill of Controversy

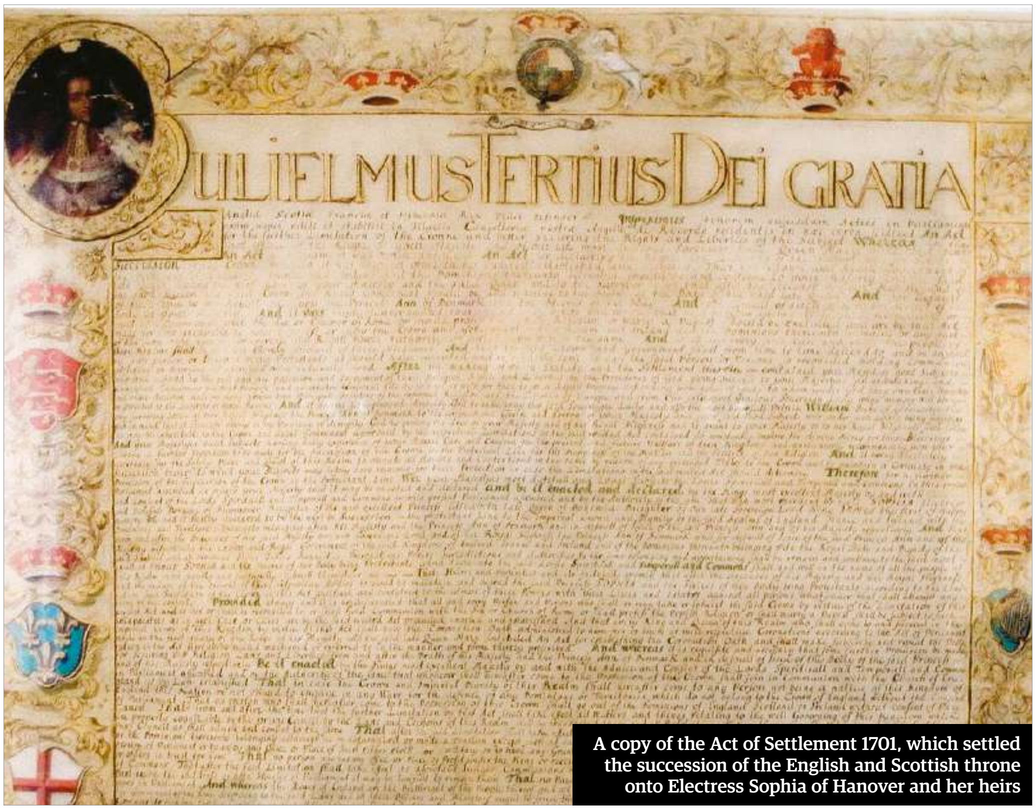
How the Tories attempted to seize power in Parliament by undermining the Whigs

The Occasional Conformity Bill, one of the most controversial issues of Anne's reign, was introduced in November 1702. To be eligible for public office, a person had to take an 'occasional' communion in the Church of England. It was a loophole for nonconformists and so the high Tories proposed the Bill to shut it down, knowing that it would prevent many Whigs from being able to run for office. Of course, for the Bill to pass it needed to get through the House of Lords, which was full of Whigs. Unsurprisingly, they were strongly against it and they resented the attempt of the Tories to push them into the background.

Anne disliked the extremism but also felt that the Bill supported the Church of England, a cause close to her heart. It was a hypocritical stance as own her beloved husband, Prince George of Denmark, practised 'occasional' communion to qualify for his position as a member of the House of Lords, although he remained a devout Lutheran. Nevertheless, listening to the wishes of his wife, George did vote in favour for the Bill but it was all vain – it failed.

The following year the Bill was brought up again, although now the queen was hesitant to support it, knowing that it would further increase tensions between the Whigs and the Tories. She chose to remain impartial and asked George not to vote for it, an attitude that helped the Bill to fail once again.

Attempting a third time, the Tories decided to attach the Bill with the Land Tax, knowing that the Whigs would be forced to pass it if they wanted continued supplies for the war. The move was controversial and upset the queen, who felt it was an example of the political extremism she wished to avoid.



A copy of the Act of Settlement 1701, which settled the succession of the English and Scottish throne onto Electress Sophia of Hanover and her heirs

Numbers on the Protestant Succession

18 The number of pregnancies Queen Anne had in a vain attempt to produce a Stuart heir

Just one of her children, Prince William, Duke of Gloucester, survived infancy. His death sparked the succession crisis

2 The number of acts introduced during the reigns of William and Mary and Anne, to ensure the Protestant succession

Electress Sophia of Hanover died just two months before Queen Anne and never got to reign

34 years The age gap between Sophia and Queen Anne

The Act of Settlement 1701 removed all Catholics from the line of succession, which meant that, according to primogeniture, King George I was actually 56th in line when he ascended the throne

and the queen and to damage her husband's own relationship with Anne.

As support for the war increased following the battle, Anne was under increasing pressure from Marlborough and Godolphin to appoint Whigs to key positions within the ministry. Unfortunately for Anne, she also needed the support of the Whigs in the ongoing fight to unite the parliaments of England and Scotland, to which to the Tories were opposed. She initially resisted calls for her to name the earl of Sunderland, the duke and duchess' son-in-law and a Whig, as the secretary of state for the Southern Department, a position held by a Tory.

By the end of 1706, however, she had relented in the hope of appeasing the Junto Whigs, the five men who would dominate government for the next four years, of which Sunderland was one. Instead, it opened the door for a wave of appointments for the Junto Whigs, which Anne found herself powerless to stop without losing Marlborough and Godolphin. To top off the queen's problems, Prince George passed away in 1708, leaving the queen devastated.

In the face of all of this, it is no wonder that Anne has been seen as the queen who was controlled by her ministers. However, it cannot be said that she didn't try to bring her government into line. In fact, she attended more cabinet meetings during her reign than any other English or British monarch, hoping her presence would keep the ministers in check. Yet the queen's obvious loyalties to the Tories did nothing to appease the situation, as it began to cast doubt on her commitment to the Hanoverian succession.

In the Act of Settlement 1701, it was outlined that the throne would pass to the Hanoverians, a Protestant royal line, if neither William nor Anne managed to produce any living offspring. The Tories were known for their Jacobite sympathies and because of this, there were those who suspected that Anne secretly hoped to disregard the Act and install her Catholic half-brother, James, as her heir.

Did the queen really want to restore the Catholic royal line? Well, the answer is no. After all, what did Anne have to gain by restoring her half-brother to the line of succession? If James was deemed legitimate then his claim to the throne actually superseded hers – the Bill of Rights, which set the line of succession when William and Mary were offered the throne, meant that Anne had received her right to the throne through Parliament and not on hereditary grounds. The claim of the pretender harmed Anne's position and so it suited her to have him declared illegitimate and in exile.

By 1710, the political situation had once again turned around. The Whigs lost support for their wish to continue the war, which had exhausted the country, and they impeached Henry Sacheverell, a High Anglican. Sacheverell had preached anti-Whig sermons and questioned the validity of the Glorious Revolution, which upset Anne. However, he was so popular with the public that the queen cautioned that his sentence should be light – it was so lenient that it is generally regarded as a victory for the Tories, who were on the rise again.

Understanding that her country was tired of the Whigs, Anne dismissed them along with Godolphin and re-appointed Harley and the Tories, who gained a landslide in the next election. Meanwhile, Anne's friendship with Sarah reached an all-time low – after 1710, the two women never saw each other again. In 1711, Anne dismissed Marlborough, too.

After years of dealing with constant fighting in her political and personal life, Anne's health began to rapidly decline. She took a near fatal turn around Christmas 1713 but managed to pull through, although it was clear that she was very ill. She dismissed Harley as lord treasurer in 1714, having lost faith in him, but was soon at death's door following a stroke.

Anne managed to appoint a new lord treasurer, the duke of Shrewsbury, a prominent Whig, at the recommendation of the Privy Council. Knowing that Shrewsbury would ensure a smooth transition of the crown to her successor, King George I, Queen Anne succumbed to her illness two days later on 1 August, 1714, finally at peace.

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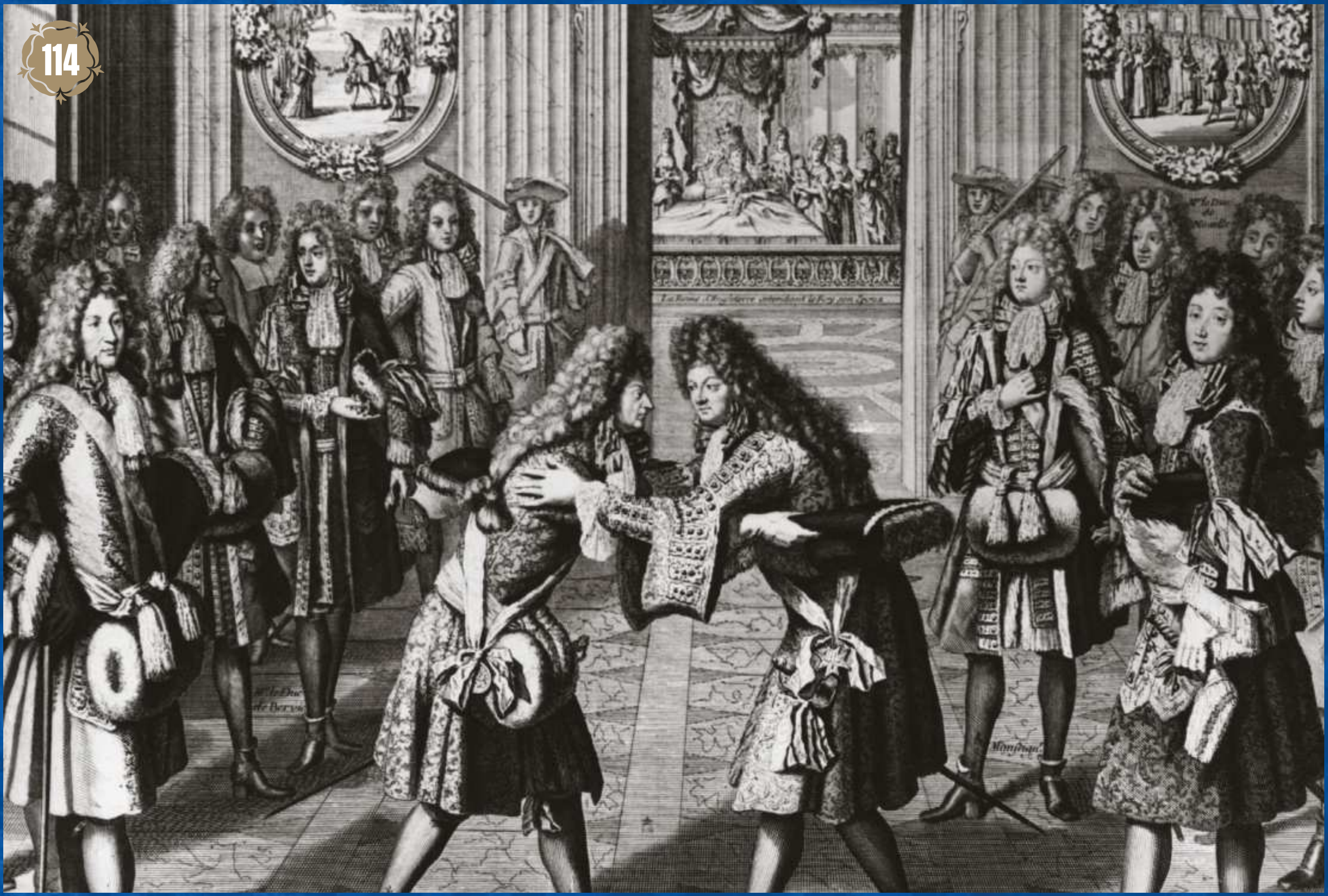

THE DEMISE & LEGACY OF THE STUARTS

Forced from their throne, the displaced dynasty built a new life abroad, but their legacy in Britain lives on today

114 The Stuarts in exile

Driven from his Scottish and English thrones, James II set up a court in France and plotted his return…

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Championed as the last hope for the exiled Stuarts, how did the Young Pretender cultivate such a legend?

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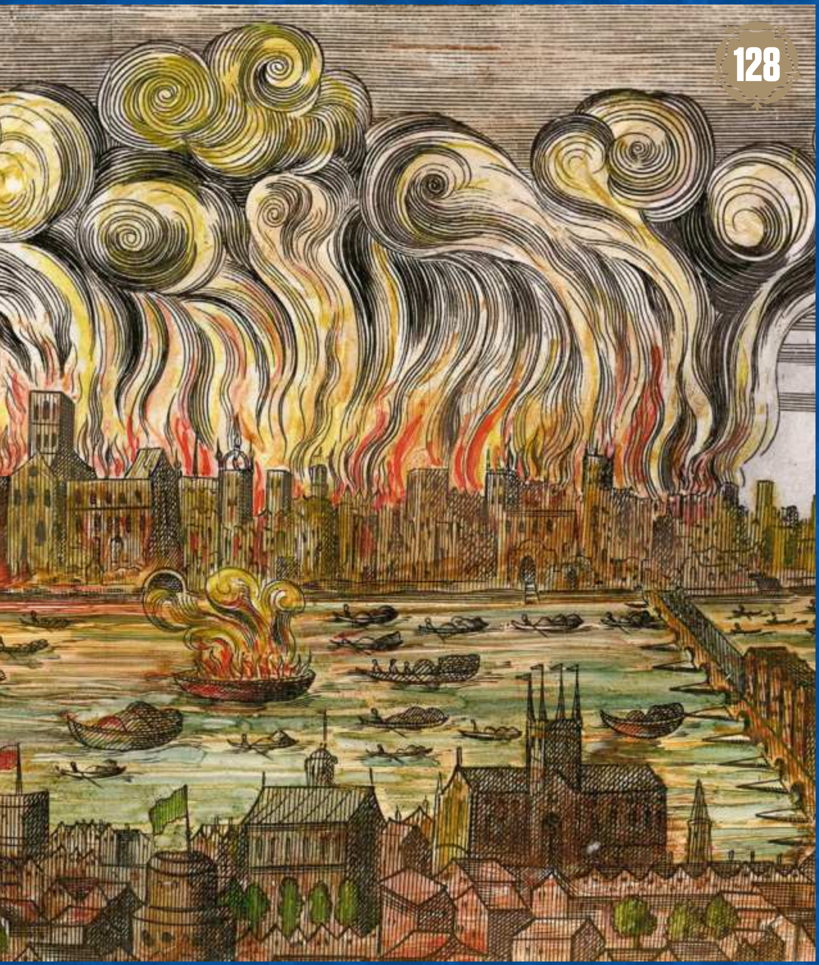
From tea and coffee to the Bank of England, discover the Stuart innovations that have endured the test of time



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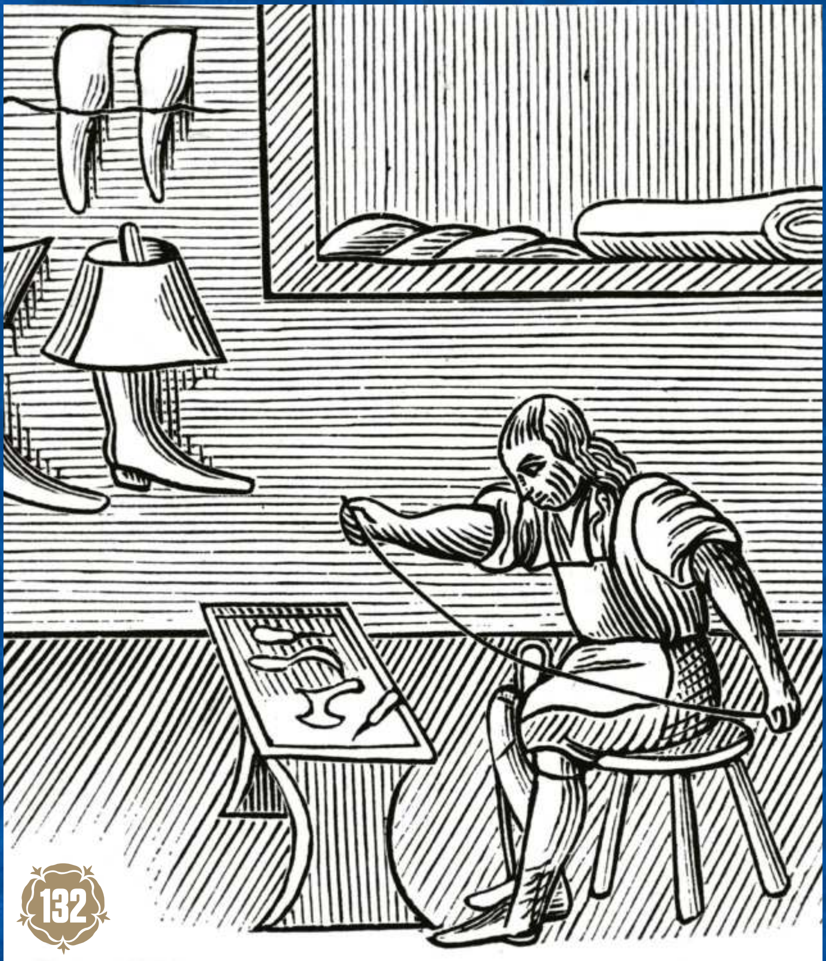

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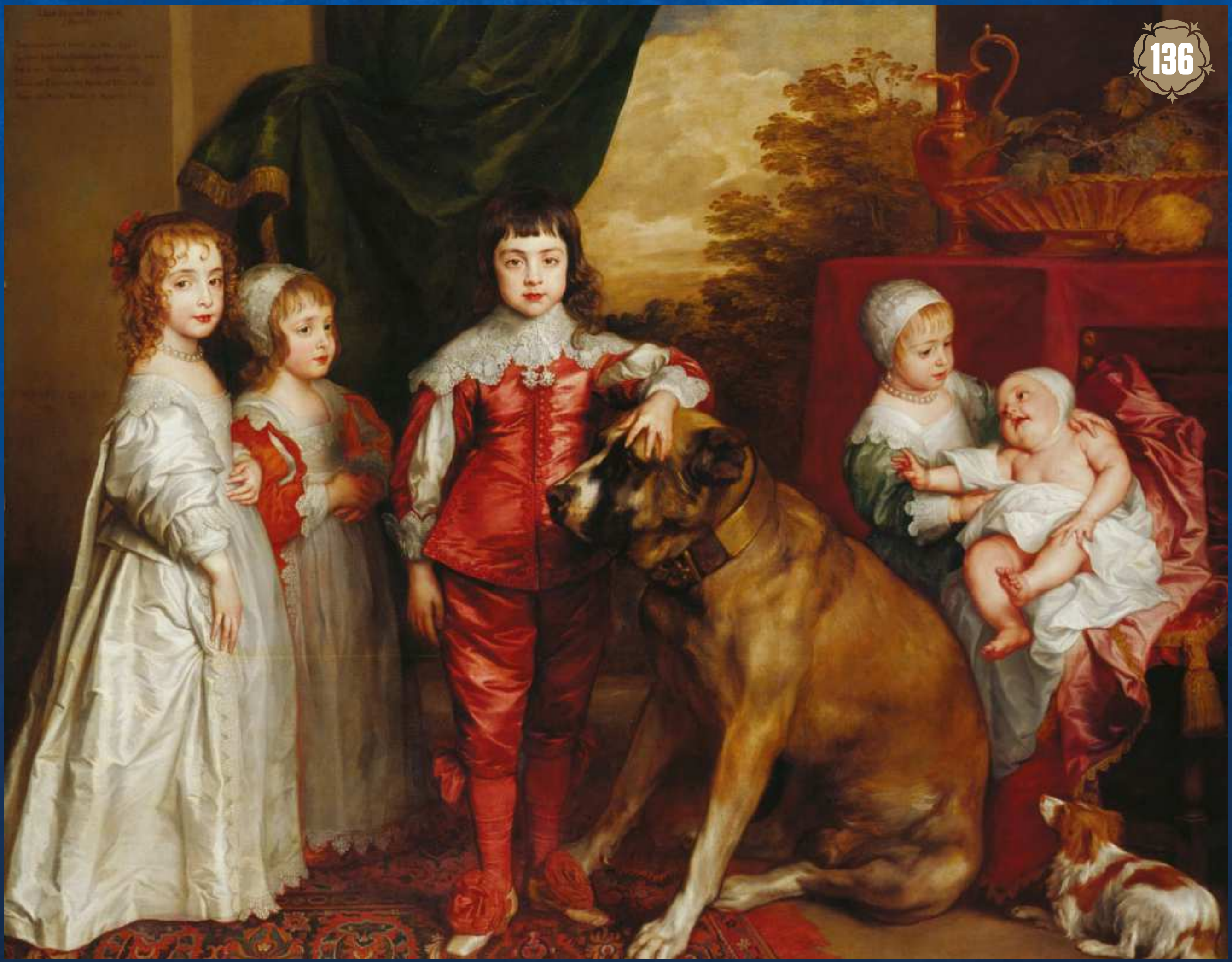

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The Stuarts in exile

Forced to flee their homeland, the Stuarts set about building a new continental royal court and becoming kings over the water

The birth of the Jacobites did not begin in Britain but rather over the channel in Europe. With the throne usurped by the House of Orange-Nassau, the Stuarts had to start anew and create a royal court in exile, relying on the charity and goodwill of various European powers to further their goal – to reclaim the throne they saw as their birthright.

There would be three Stuart pretenders to the British and Irish crowns, with the progenitor, James II, being both king and the first claimant. As brother to Charles II, he took the throne in 1685 but did not possess his brother's pragmatic approach or charm.

Unrepentantly Catholic in a country filled with Protestants, he would have to tread lightly – something James was not wont to do. Unlike Charles, he went about removing high-ranking Protestants from political and military offices, replacing them with men of his own religion. This spurred fears that he was looking to convert the country back to Catholicism and while this seems to be untrue, the king did nothing to belay the fears until it was too late.

A Catholic heir all but sealed James' fate and brought the country back to the brink of civil war. His Protestant daughter Mary had married William of Orange, a Dutch prince and now the man that Parliament reached out to in the hopes of saving their religion and country. Convinced to take the throne from his father-in-law, William crossed the English Channel in November 1688 after an invitation from England's worried Parliament with 15,000 troops and looked to oust James from power. This daring act is now immortalised in British history as the Glorious Revolution.

Not wanting to actually kill a member of his family, William allowed James to flee the country and make for the safer shores of Europe. The Stuarts' destiny now lay in the hands of whichever foreign power would offer to shelter them and their court in exile.

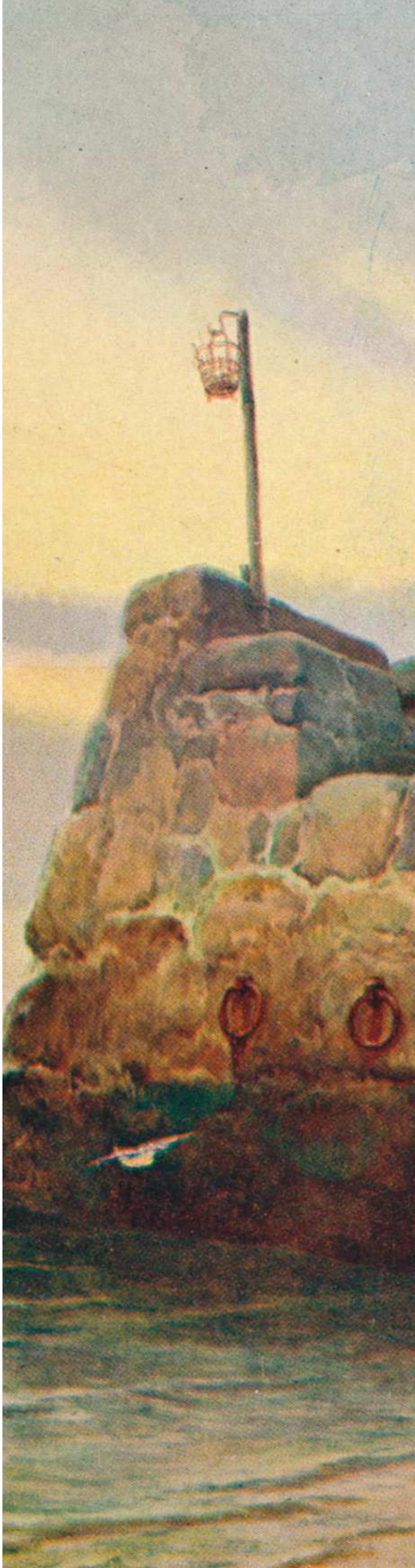
As fortune would have it, James and his court were accepted with open arms by Louis XIV of France, a phenomenally powerful, wealthy and Catholic king but this act wasn't out of the kindness of his heart – it was known that Louis had designs "to make himself Master of all Europe."

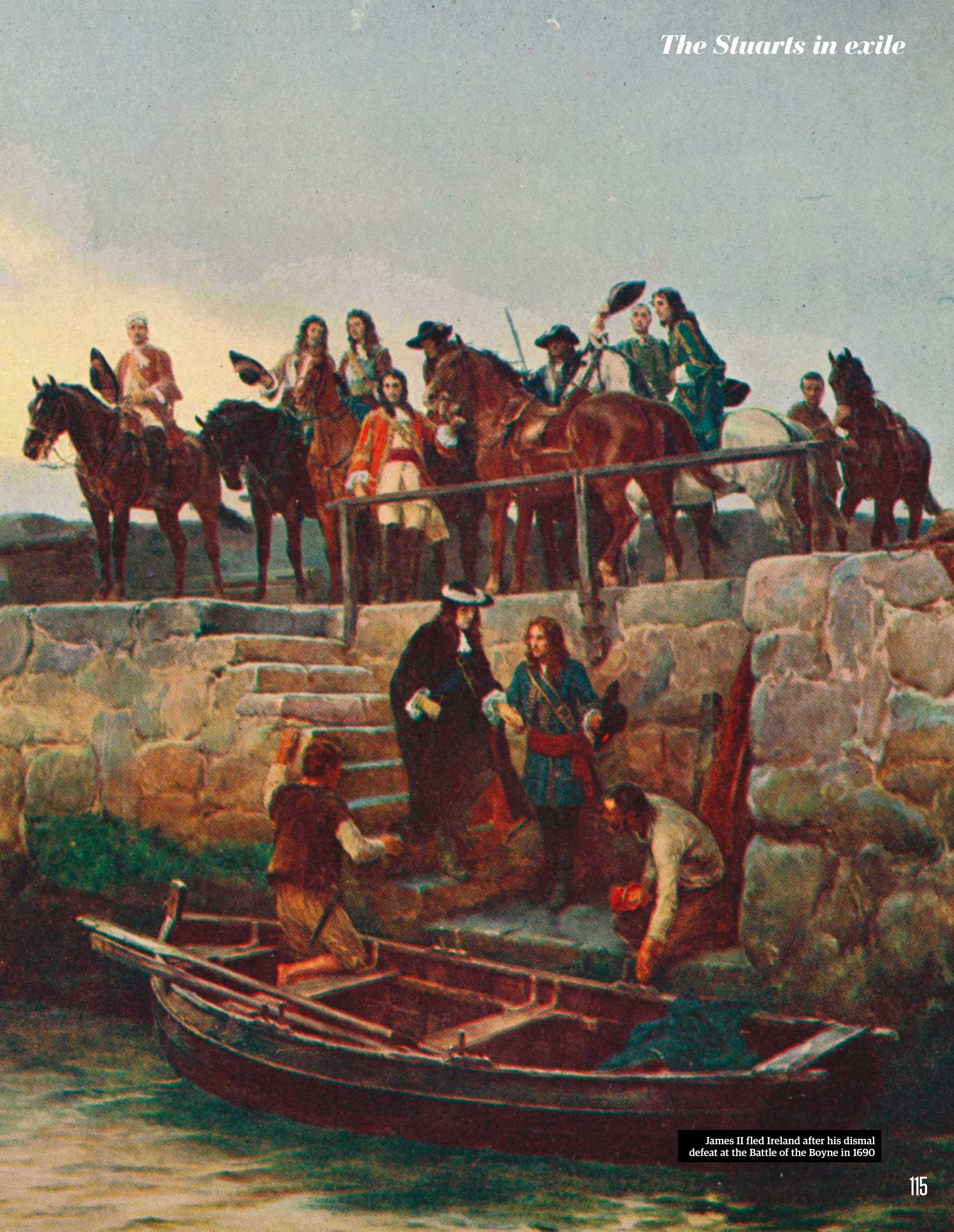
In the eyes of the French king, James was still the rightful claimant to the English and Scottish thrones, and France would have benefitted if he was allowed to return to rule. With a Protestant monarch in England, Louis saw that English troops could now enter the European wars and sought to have James reinstated as quickly as possible to keep the balance of power from tipping away from France. So Louis vowed to help James fight for his rightful place on the throne.

James and his court were allowed to reside in the grand palace of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, built on a commanding plateau above the River Seine just outside Paris. This base of operations had a grand facade but the palace hid an uglier truth within. Abandoned, neglected and sparsely furnished the building had become known as a "labyrinth of misery" and was given a quick overhaul before the royal party arrived.

This building, noted for its lack of space for James to formally conduct royal affairs, would become the nexus for Jacobite activity for the next 20 years. It mirrored the multiple generations of Stuart men and their Jacobite cause – strong and seemingly righteous on the outside, but with a rotten core.

When he was king, James craved structure and so he developed a daily routine while in exile.





James II fled Ireland after his dismal defeat at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690

Resolving to "never spend more than eight hours in bed", he prayed, exercised, conducted business, entertained guests and indulged in his favourite pastime – hunting. He increasingly looked inward to find the answer to why he had fallen from grace, punishing himself with perceived sins and blaming his various dalliances with mistresses as the primary cause of God's disfavour of him.

James' motley band of followers was predominately made up of English and Scottish Catholics but the image of a bigoted Catholic stronghold at Saint-Germain-en-Laye is Whig propaganda. Protestants were not ignored, forced to confess on their deathbeds (by having communion wafers rammed down their throats) and James II was in favour of religious toleration, despite what his policies as king suggested. In fact, there were actually some Protestants in his entourage and with their help, James set about his goal –to win the hearts and minds of his former subjects and reclaim his throne from the usurper William III.

The Jacobites had a propaganda wing of their own and this was the first step in creating the Jacobite image that James and his descendants would work to cultivate. James' father, Charles I, had become somewhat of a Catholic and royal martyr and James was keen to tie in his father's image with that of his own – to shine a golden light of nostalgia over the executed king's reign. By painting the Glorious Revolution as an illegal usurpation, the Jacobites were hoping to evoke sympathy from British subjects and win support for the Stuart cause.

Poems, songs and pamphlets were produced along with portraits to make James' face recognisable when he returned to claim his birthright. Financing this undertaking was an annual royal stipend of 600,000 livres from the French crown. A small fortune, but still not as much as James had enjoyed while still on the throne – a massive salary of £2 million that had made him the richest king since Henry VIII.

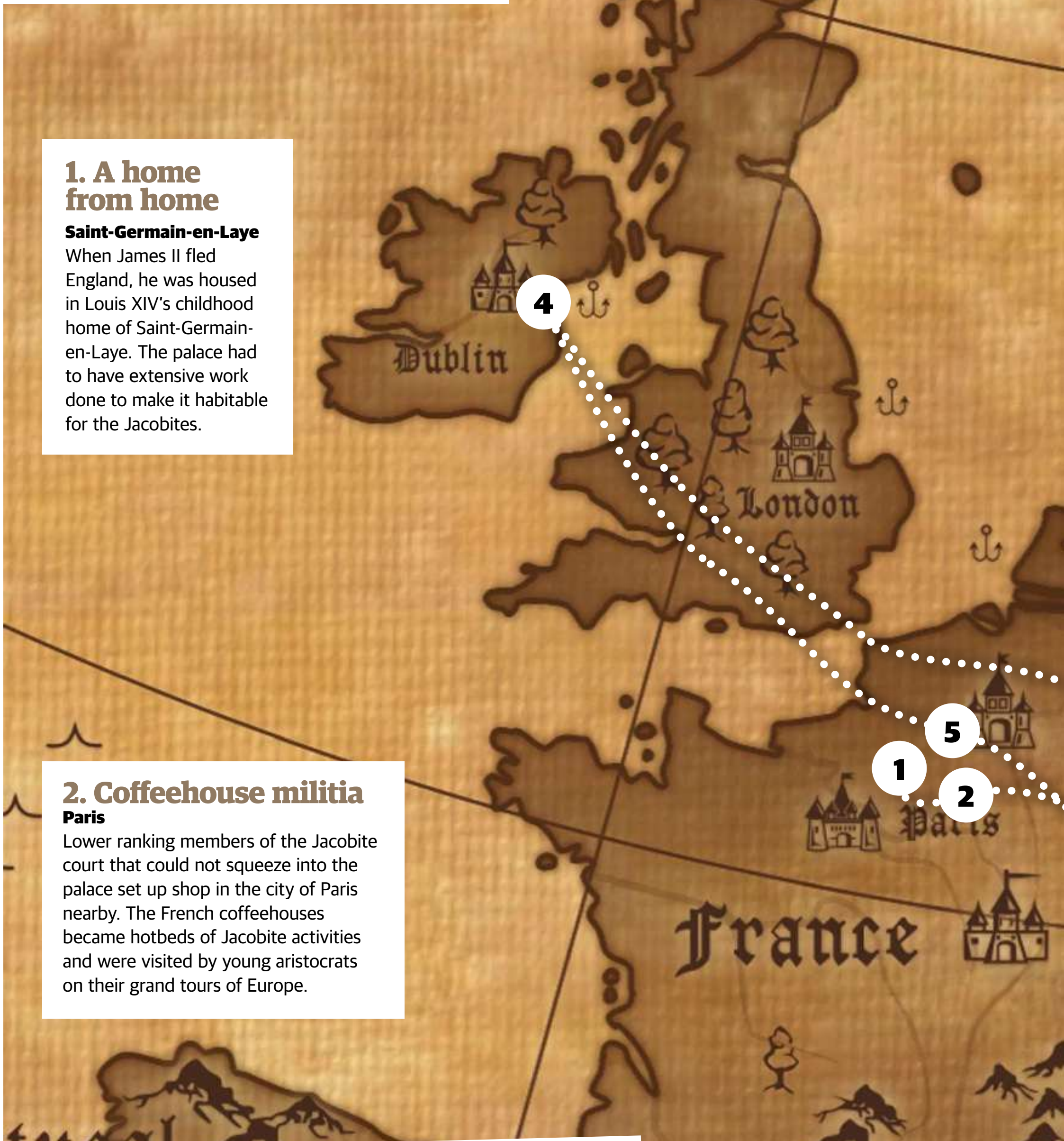
James II, along with his son and grandson, was able to retain his royal image with money provided by other European powers. Salaries like this enabled the Stuarts to maintain their royal attire and look every bit the rightful king when embarking on other important tasks, like reaching out and winning over European monarchies.

Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I commanded a vast territory and would have made a powerful ally, so James sent an envoy in 1689. The recently exiled king portrayed himself as a martyr for the Catholic cause, hoping that this emotional plea would move rulers to aid in his planned rebellion.

Unfortunately, James' idea of religion playing a leading role in diplomacy, rather than self-interest, was rather naïve as Leopold shot down the idea of an alliance immediately. Addressing James as "serene highness" rather than majesty was a calculated slight to show he did not share Louis' conviction that he was the rightful, or best, ruler of England and Scotland. The emperor felt that James had brought his troubles on himself and,

Royal Tour

The Stuarts suffered numerous setbacks while making a life in Europe

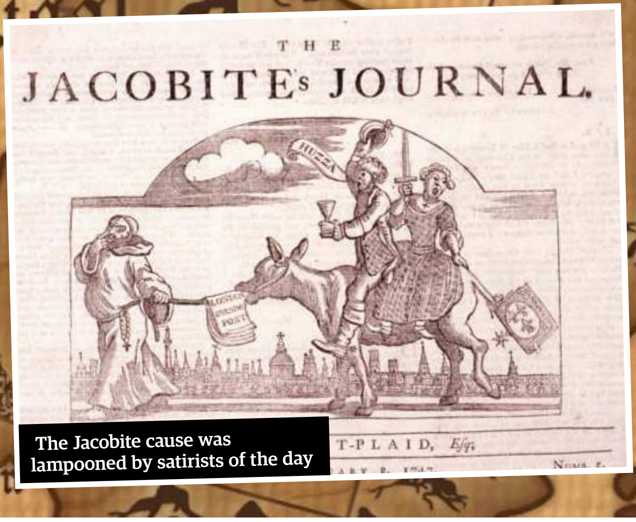


1. A home from home

Saint-Germain-en-Laye
When James II fled England, he was housed in Louis XIV's childhood home of Saint-Germain-en-Laye. The palace had to have extensive work done to make it habitable for the Jacobites.

2. Coffeehouse militia

Paris
Lower ranking members of the Jacobite court that could not squeeze into the palace set up shop in the city of Paris nearby. The French coffeehouses became hotbeds of Jacobite activities and were visited by young aristocrats on their grand tours of Europe.



The Jacobite cause was lampooned by satirists of the day

3. A temporary home

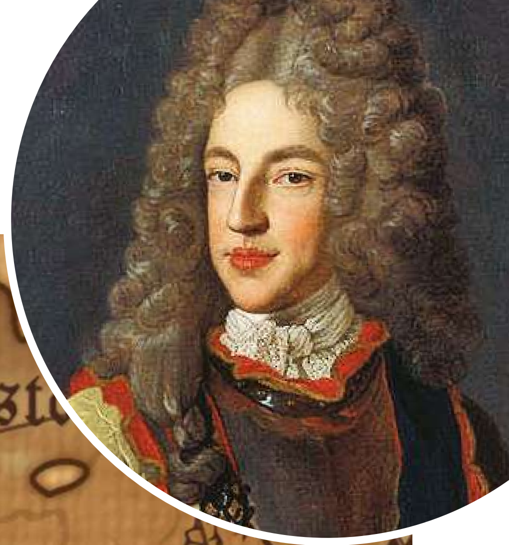
Bar-le-Duc

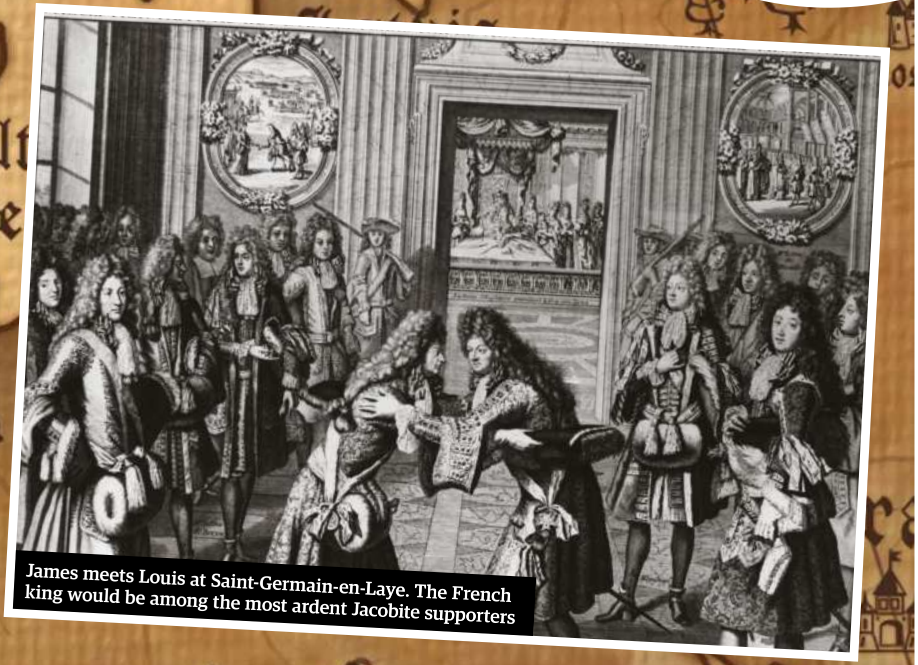
With the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht, the Old Pretender was forced out of France and into the temporary setting of Bar-le-Duc in Lorraine. Now part of France, the territory was an independent duchy in the 18th century.

4. Battle of the Boyne

River Boyne

The pivotal battle in James II's Irish campaign saw the Jacobite forces soundly defeated by William III. Poor equipment and training are often blamed for this ignominious defeat.





James meets Louis at Saint-Germain-en-Laye. The French king would be among the most ardent Jacobite supporters

5. A friend to the cause

Paris

Louis XIV saw the personal merit of placing a sympathetic Catholic monarch wear the British crown and supported many Jacobite bids to retake the throne, although they all came to nothing.

6. Palazzo del Re

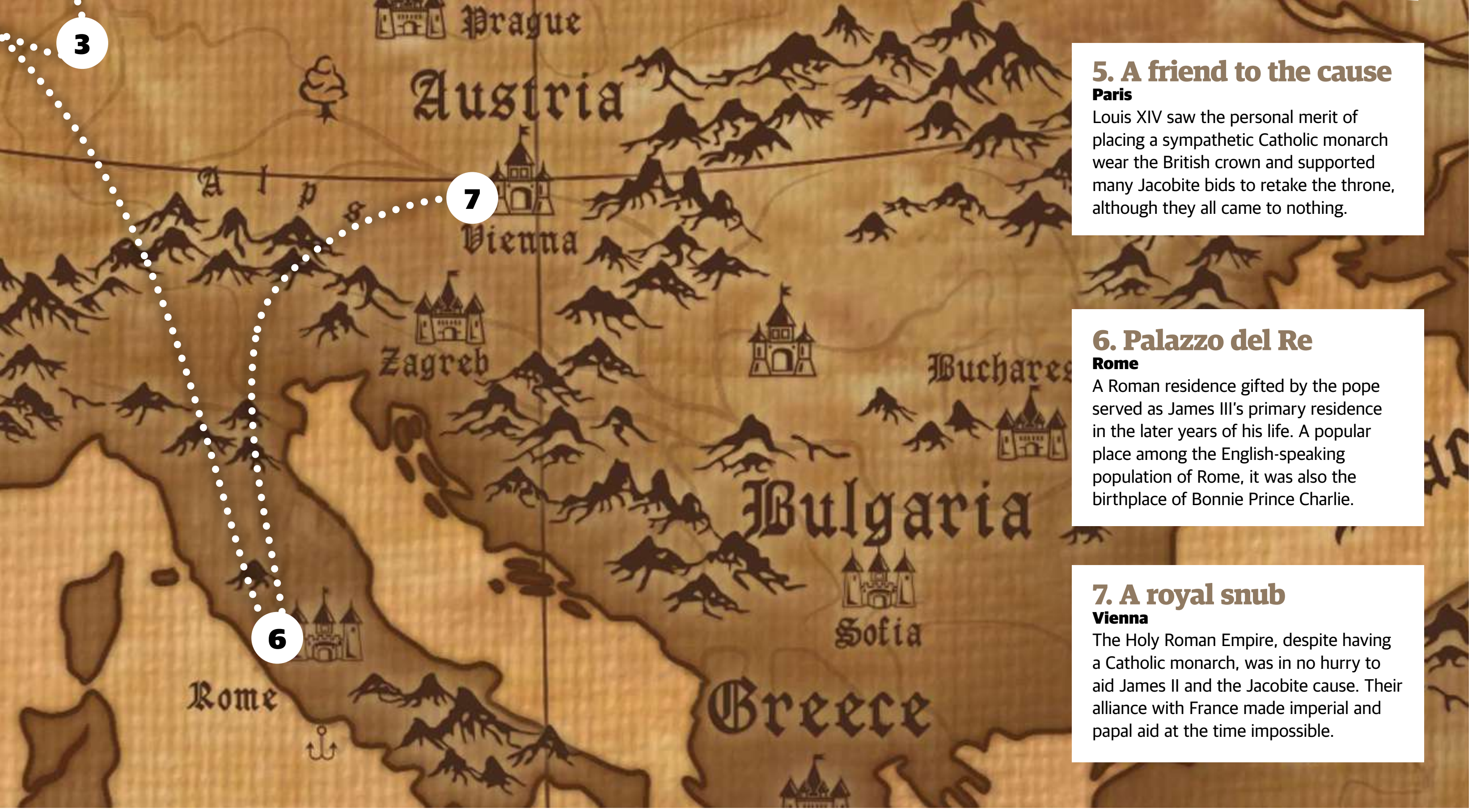
Rome

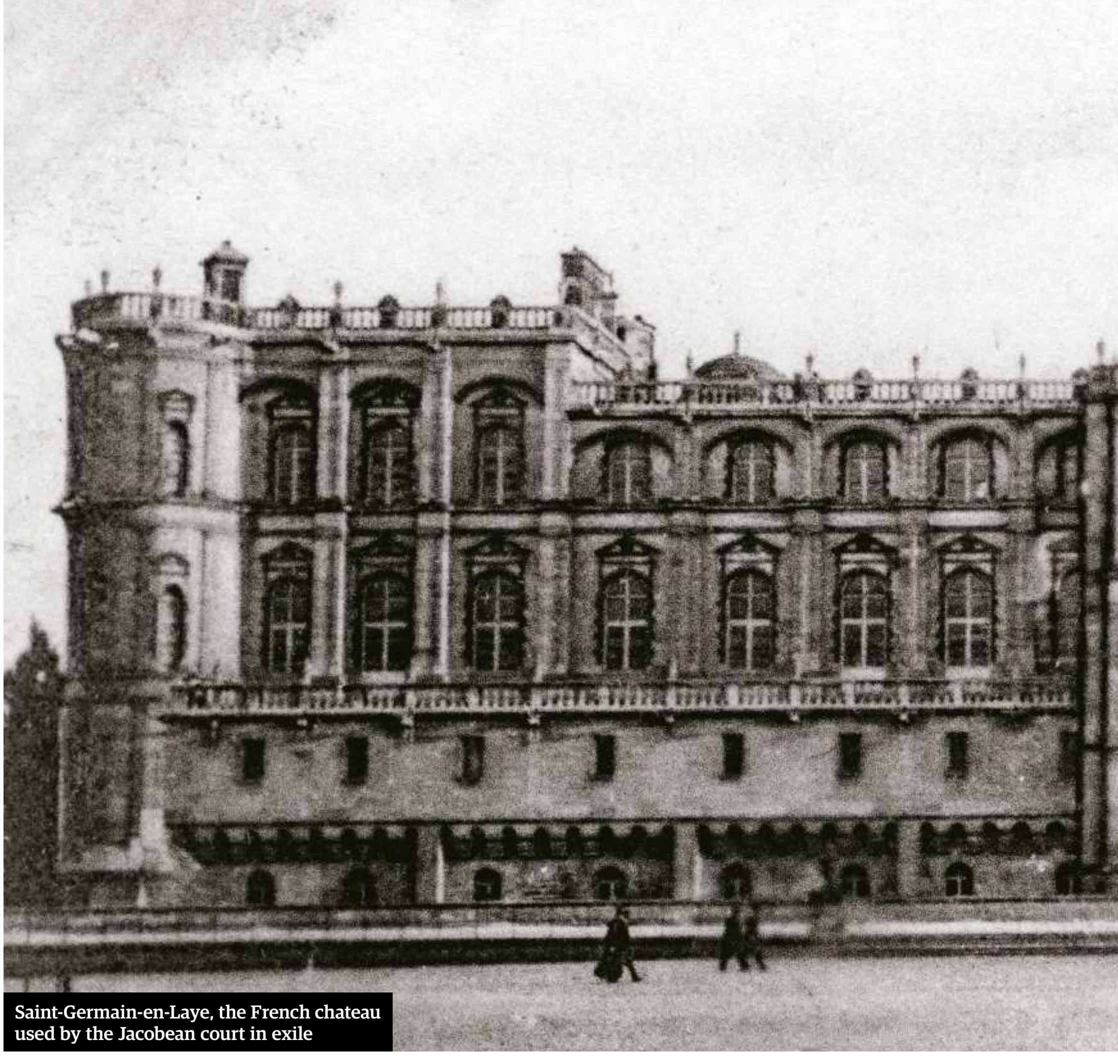
A Roman residence gifted by the pope served as James III's primary residence in the later years of his life. A popular place among the English-speaking population of Rome, it was also the birthplace of Bonnie Prince Charlie.

7. A royal snub

Vienna

The Holy Roman Empire, despite having a Catholic monarch, was in no hurry to aid James II and the Jacobite cause. Their alliance with France made imperial and papal aid at the time impossible.





Saint-Germain-en-Laye, the French chateau used by the Jacobean court in exile

The Jacobites in Ireland

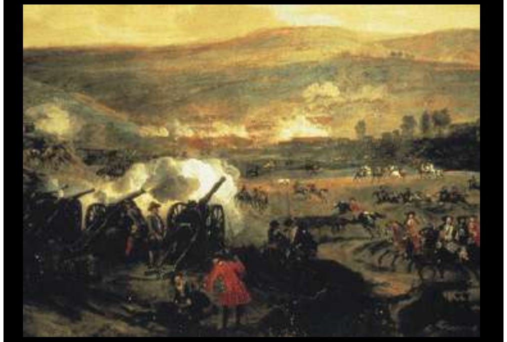
From their stronghold in Europe, the Jacobites considered retaking the crown through the Emerald Isle

Comfortable and safe in his newly acquired palace of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, James II must have looked at reclaiming his throne with some trepidation. With only French aid forthcoming from the continent, James saw his best opportunity for the reconquest of Britain to come through Ireland. With French troops at his back, the king landed on the Irish coast in March 1689, intent on using the island as a springboard for an invasion of mainland Britain.

In Ireland, James displayed his naïve grasp of politics that would come to haunt many of his diplomatic dealings. Calling together the Irish parliament in Dublin, he sought to repeal anti-Catholic laws, winning the support of local landowners but alienating Protestants in Ireland (who were now moved to ally with William), England and Scotland. This political blunder would be compounded by military failure.

As a younger man, James was noted for his reckless and fearless approach to battle but age seemed to have dulled his lust for combat. Indecisive and lacking sound military judgement, he went to meet William fresh off the boat to command his forces personally at the River Boyne. Outnumbered and outgunned by William's superior troops, the Jacobite army routed, leaving James' hopes for the throne in tatters.

With the poorly trained and equipped Irish troops having led the rout, James commented to an Irish noble, "Your countrymen have run away." He received the reply, "Sire, your Majesty seems to have won the race!" James found that the fight had left him after the Boyne and he returned to France, any chance of taking Ireland now lost.



The Jacobite infantry were sorely lacking in training and equipment at the Battle of the Boyne

because he was allied with France, a friendship with the Habsburgs was out of the question.

Another blow to Jacobite relations for James II was the lack of papal support that he received. As a Catholic monarch wanting to oust a Protestant usurper, he must have banked on the pope's blessing being a no-brainer. However, what he found was that his past run-ins with Pope Innocent XI, who felt the king's domestic policies actually endangered the lives of Catholics living in the British Isles, left the Vatican unwilling to lend any aid at all. Again, the Stuarts' close alliance with the French monarchy also soured their relations with other powers as the pope hated and feared Louis XIV in equal measure. In fact, the hatred ran so deep that one of James' courtiers in Rome was told that the papacy was willing to crucify Jesus again if it meant they could be rid of the French.

James also had to contend with naysayers from within the French court, who constantly insisted that the Stuart king had little support in England. The archbishop of Reims, Louis' younger brother, openly mocked James and the French politicians tried to steer Jacobite diplomacy and intrigue as much as possible.

With the recruiting of double agents all over the continent – for instance, the Jacobite ambassador to Madrid – the French were keen to keep the interests of the Stuarts directly in line with those of the French crown and alienated other royal houses as a result. James must have felt like a prisoner in his own home as although he was allowed to move and act freely, the French kept a constant eye on all visitors and mail going to and from the palace that was being used as the Jacobite headquarters.

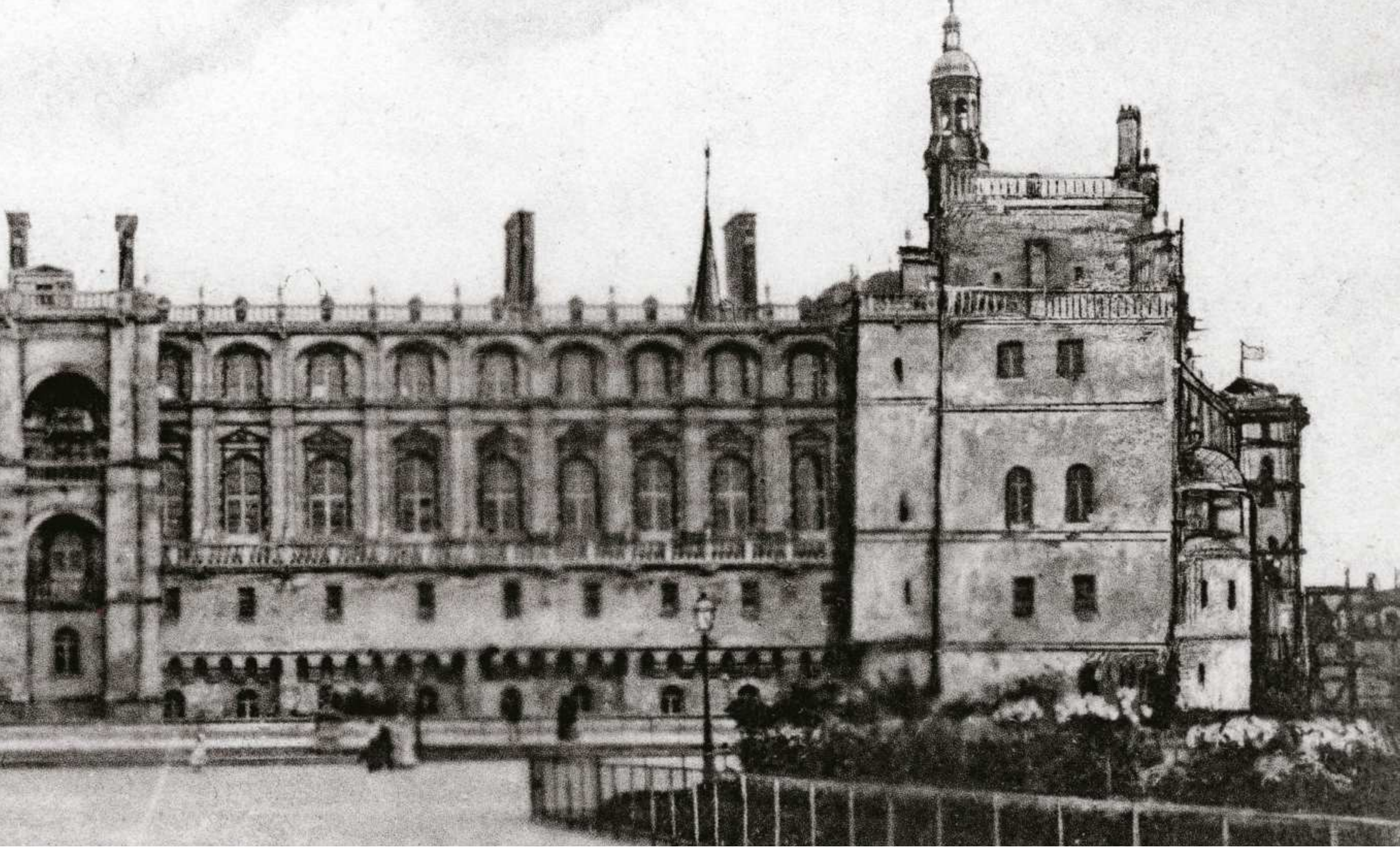
The image of the Jacobites as serious contenders for the throne of the three kingdoms was dealt a blow by James' defeat in Ireland at the Battle of the Boyne. Returning to France in 1690, the Jacobite court was now treated with indifference by the French and talk of recapturing England was all but gone. James was also not allowed to accompany Louis to the Siege of Mons in 1691 – another telling slight on James' failing military prowess.

The coming of age of James Frances Stuart, James II's son and heir, saw new life enter the Stuart cause. His upbringing had been carefully monitored by his father, who did not wish for his son to fall to the same vices – women and drink – as he had done in his youth.

Raised under strict rules, the so-called James III had his youthful spirit wrung out of him from a young age with an incredibly authoritarian upbringing. This may not have been necessary if the family had still lived in England, but if he was to have any chance of taking back the throne, his mind needed to be placed on the right tracks. So he was raised for 18 stifling years in Saint-Germain-en-Laye as the perfect prince, schooled in war and politics with just one aim in mind – winning back his father's throne.

James III, who would come to be known as the Old Pretender, made his first abortive claim for the throne in 1708 when his French armada was forced to turn back from British shores by the Royal Navy. This military setback was compounded by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, which, while securing peace in Europe, called for James and his followers to be expelled from France and their enclave in Saint-Germain-en-Laye. Louis XIV, weary of war and wanting an end to the bloodshed, agreed and James was left to find a new home. Even in its sorry state, the palace had been the Stuarts' home for over 20 years and to lose such a connection must have stung the young king in exile.

The town of Bar-le-Duc in Lorraine, an independent duchy, was chosen as the new base of operations. Not a social hub like Paris, James felt cut off from his supporters, no longer living in the heart of European politics – his finger had been taken off the pulse. Seemingly undeterred, he planned another invasion army and set off in 1715 to raise the Scottish against the Hanoverian



government of Britain. His efforts failed to place a Stuart back on the throne and he returned to France a beaten man.

Unlike James II, the Old Pretender would have better luck garnering papal support, starting with Pope Clement XI granting the Jacobites a more permanent base of operations in the Palazzo Muti in Rome. They also gained a country home at Albano and a papal pension of 12,000 Roman crowns, which became James' main source of income for the rest of his life. James III's royal image was enhanced by two different popes – Clement XII and Benedict XIV – who both fully backed him and his cause. The Papal States would even become James' home for his last years and his final resting place as the Old Pretender gave up trying to retake the British and Irish thrones after the failed rising of 1715 rising.

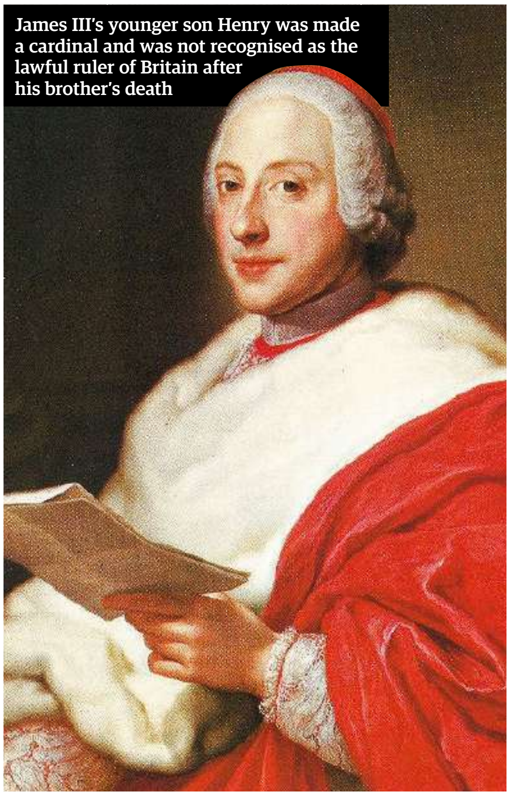
Attempts to gain significant funding from other sources ultimately failed and the French remained the main supporters of the Jacobites. James' efforts were now less focused on his own regal ambitions but rather on securing funding for his children's bids on the crown. Both of James' sons – Charles, known as the Young Pretender, and Henry – were put at the head of planned invasions that never transpired before the faithful 1745 rising.

The Old Pretender managed to estrange Charles with an insult after his failed attempt. Making his younger son Henry a cardinal in Rome was a snub to Charles, the older brother who, having just failed in his latest endeavour to take back Britain, must have seen the move as a stab in the back. With his hopes to restore his family to their rightful place well and truly dashed, coupled with his son's departure from Rome, James III began to decline into illness. Although wealthy and still exuding royalty, he had become depressed and despondent with the futility of the Stuart cause. He finally passed away on 11 June 1766.

The Jacobite court, both in Paris and Rome, lived on after the Stuarts and was a crown jewel for the 'European tour' that young aristocrats would embark on during the period. The Jacobite coffeehouses formed the nucleus of these wealthy jaunts in Paris while the Enclave in Rome would be particularly popular with any English-speaking noble, friend or foe. English-speaking doctors were much preferred and wine sellers made an excellent trade hawking fine vintages to visiting gentry with gold in their pockets.

The House of Stuart saw its fortunes steadily decline after the usurpation in 1688. Propped up by France throughout the three generations of bids for the throne, this alliance would both be a blessing and a curse. With French support, the Jacobites were able to launch multiple invasions but, especially early in their attempts, the French alliance hurt diplomatic relations. Throughout these setbacks, the Stuarts always maintained the airs of royalty, helped by royal pay cheques keeping their coffers full.

> "Although he was allowed to move and act freely, the French kept a constant eye on all visitors and mail going to and from the palace"



James III's younger son Henry was made a cardinal and was not recognised as the lawful ruler of Britain after his brother's death

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The myth of Bonnie Prince Charlie

Did the man behind the legend of the Young Pretender measure up?

Words by Jacqueline Riding

After eight long months, the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion came to a bloody end at the Battle of Culloden on 16 April 1746. A combination of exhaustion, hunger, the decision to stand and fight rather than wait for the whole army to gather on an exposed, boggy moor and against a well-fed, rested and broadly better-armed opposition were all factors that led to the Jacobite army's defeat. But the question is how did a campaign described by contemporaries as madcap, even reckless, get off the ground in the first place?

We could point to the enduring, although dwindling, support for the House of Stuart, particularly in Scotland, its ancient seat. Or the certain belief among some British and Irish Catholics that they would fare much better under a Catholic monarch. Add to this the fervent desire among some to tear up the Acts of Union that had forged a new nation from the old Kingdoms of Scotland and England.

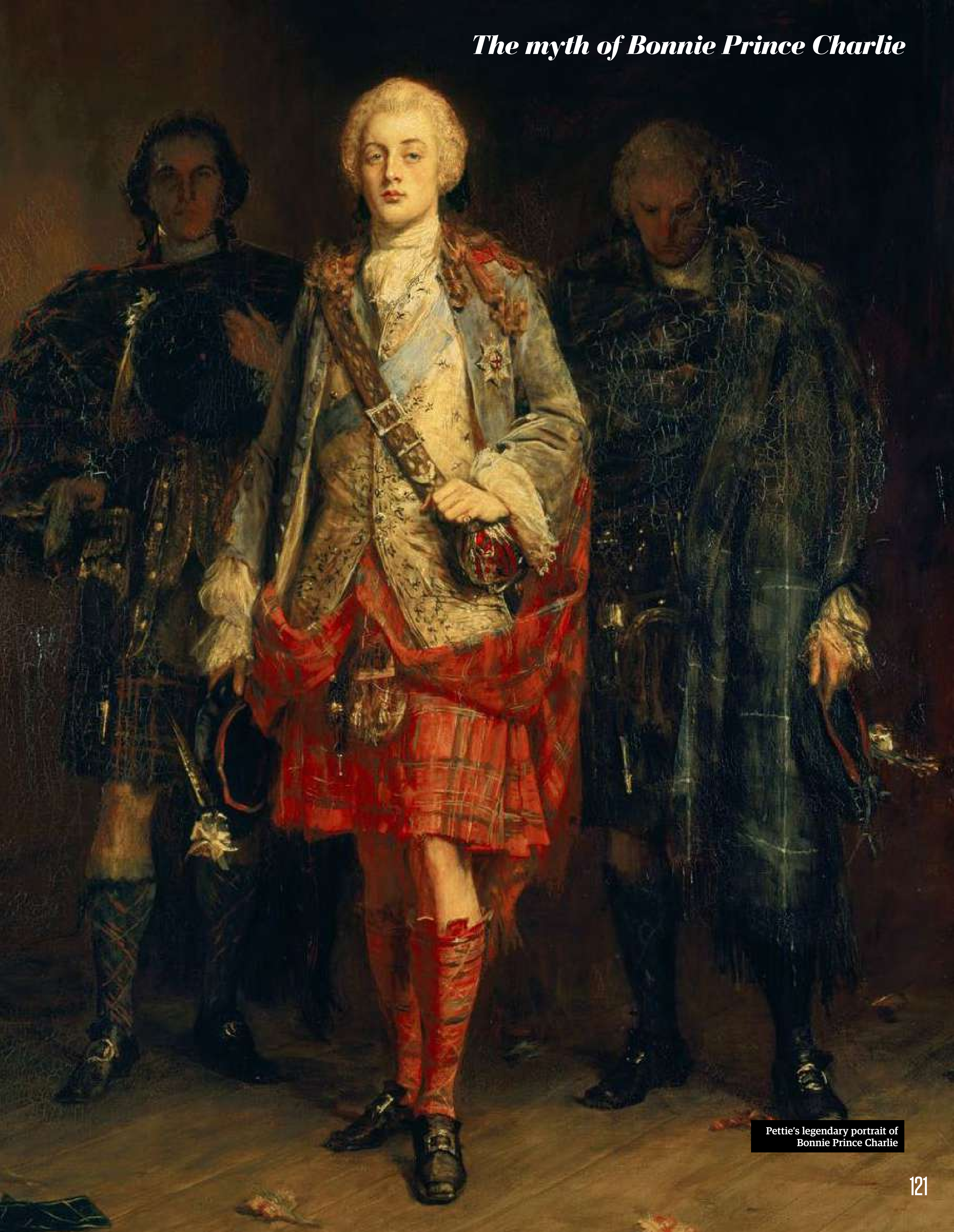
Then there was the recent deployment of the majority of British troops in Flanders, fighting the old enemy, France, leaving Great Britain more or less undefended. Or even the pragmatic, some might say cynical, manner by which King Louis XV used the threat, as well as the reality, of a French invasion in support of his poor, disinherited Stuart cousins to keep the British government and the new Hanoverian dynasty, France's European and colonial rivals, on constant alert.

Collectively, these circumstances go a long way to explain how the Jacobite cause was still very much alive in 1745. But they don't clarify why and how the arrival of a lone ship – not the hoped-for French fleet – off the coast of the Western Highlands, carrying a handful of men and guns, a modest war chest and precious little else, quickly turned into, as Tom Holland has described it, "the greatest 18th-century crisis to menace the Union of Great Britain."

The extraordinary success, initially at least, of what was to be the last Jacobite rebellion can only be explained by one factor: its leader, Charles Edward Stuart. To have organised even this low-key descent on Britain in complete secrecy from his own father, the so-called James VIII & III, along with a majority of his supporters and even under the very nose of the Stuarts' most important sponsor, King Louis, took guile, patience, determination and the ability to judge as well as seize the moment.

But then, after a somewhat lacklustre arrival in Scotland, to persuade the loyal but unimpressed clan chiefs that this attempt was worth risking everything once more, to march across Scotland, gathering a sizable army en route, occupy the great city of Edinburgh with barely a shot fired, defeat a contingent of the British army in battle, and then cross into England requires something else. A good amount of luck and the element of surprise were essential, but so too was an inspiring leader. So what kind of man was Bonnie Prince Charlie?

Before his dramatic and central appearance on the European political stage, Charles was very

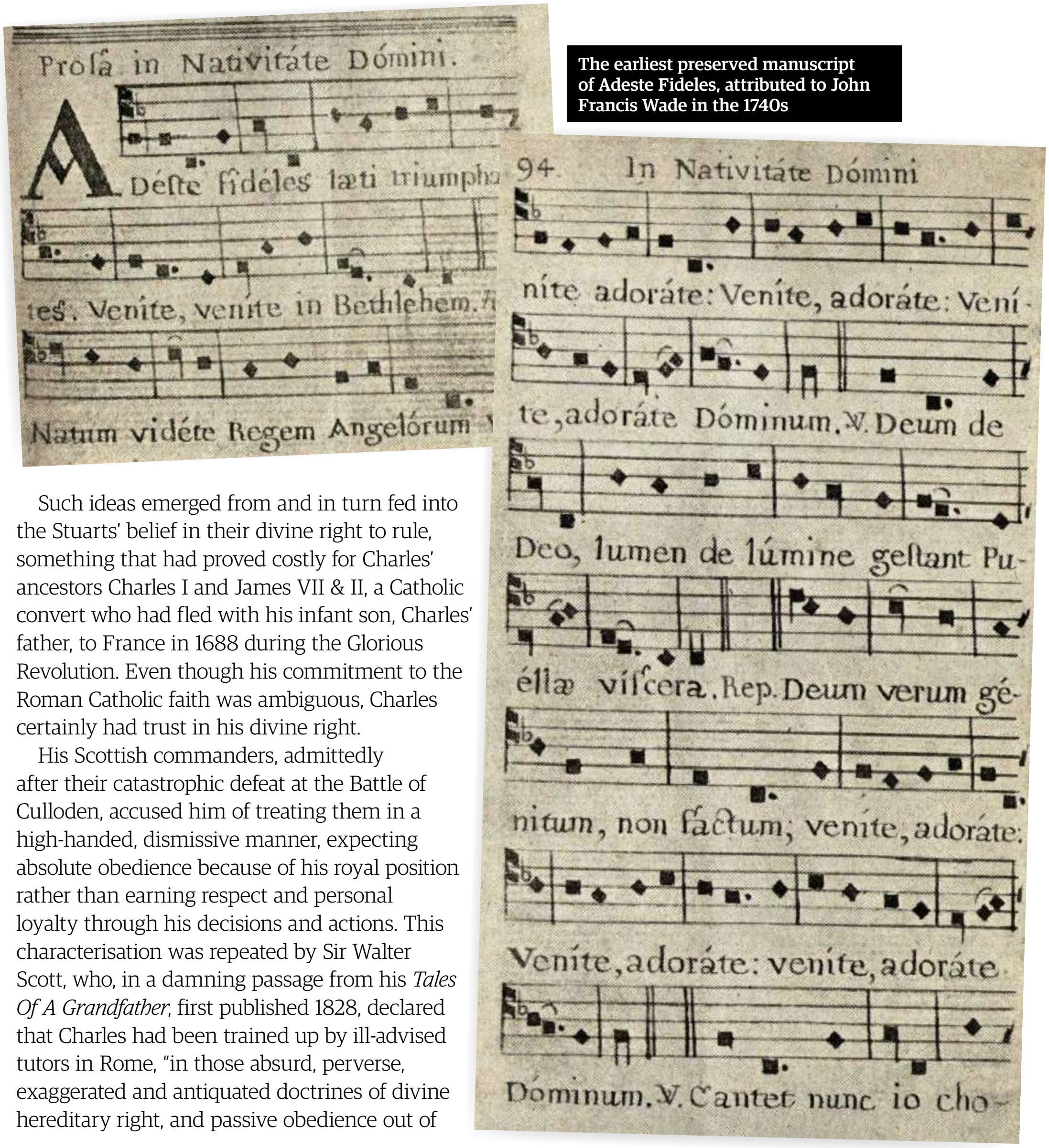


Pettie's legendary portrait of Bonnie Prince Charlie much in the wings, kicking his heels, hoping for an opportunity to realise his destiny. His birth in 1720 gave the Jacobite cause a major boost – he was the first legitimate Stuart male from the senior and Catholic branch since his father James Francis Edward's own birth in 1688, the event that had kickstarted the constitutional crisis and the dynasty's eventual exile to France and then Rome.

Even Charles' birth date, 20 December (British Old Style Calendar) or 31 December (European New Style Calendar) placed his arrival firmly within the Christmas and New Year festival period, imbuing him with a Messianic allure. It has been suggested that the popular Christmas carol, *O Come All Ye Faithful*, the Latin original *Adeste Fideles*, written by the staunch Stuart supporter John Francis Wade, is a coded Jacobite call to the said faithful to behold and worship the child born "the King of Angels" – using a well-known play on 'Angelorum', or angels, and 'Anglorum', meaning 'English'.

Omens prefiguring a Stuart restoration with Charles as the divinely chosen leader continued into his childhood. One contemporary, recalling an incident that had occurred in the chapel of the family's summer palace in Albano, states that as Charles and his younger brother, Henry, "were at their Devotions, a small Piece of Ceiling, which it seems is curiously ornamented with various Flowers in Fret-work, detach'd itself from the rest, and a Thistle fell into the Lap of the Elder, on which he started and looking up, A Rose fell immediately after."

This, the author continues, "together with a Star of great Magnitude which the Astronomers pretend appear'd at his Nativity, and was never before discover'd, with many other Portents and old Prophecies" was seen as an indication of Charles' good fortune and – more importantly for the cause – that God was on his side.


Proſa in Nativitáte Dómini.
A Déſte fidéles læti triumpha
tes. Venite, venite in Bethlehem.
Natum vidéte Regem Angelórum
94. In Nativitáte Dómini
níte adoráte: Veníte, adoráte: Vení-
te, adoráte Dóminum. ℣. Deum de
Deo, lumen de lúmine geſtant Pu-
éllæ víſcera. Rep. Deum verum gé-
nitum, non factum; venite, adoráte:
Venite, adoráte: venite, adoráte
Dóminum. ℣. Cantet nunc io cho-

The earliest preserved manuscript of Adeste Fideles, attributed to John Francis Wade in the 1740s

Such ideas emerged from and in turn fed into the Stuarts' belief in their divine right to rule, something that had proved costly for Charles' ancestors Charles I and James VII & II, a Catholic convert who had fled with his infant son, Charles' father, to France in 1688 during the Glorious Revolution. Even though his commitment to the Roman Catholic faith was ambiguous, Charles certainly had trust in his divine right.

His Scottish commanders, admittedly after their catastrophic defeat at the Battle of Culloden, accused him of treating them in a high-handed, dismissive manner, expecting absolute obedience because of his royal position rather than earning respect and personal loyalty through his decisions and actions. This characterisation was repeated by Sir Walter Scott, who, in a damning passage from his *Tales Of A Grandfather*, first published 1828, declared that Charles had been trained up by ill-advised tutors in Rome, "in those absurd, perverse, exaggerated and antiquated doctrines of divine hereditary right, and passive obedience out of

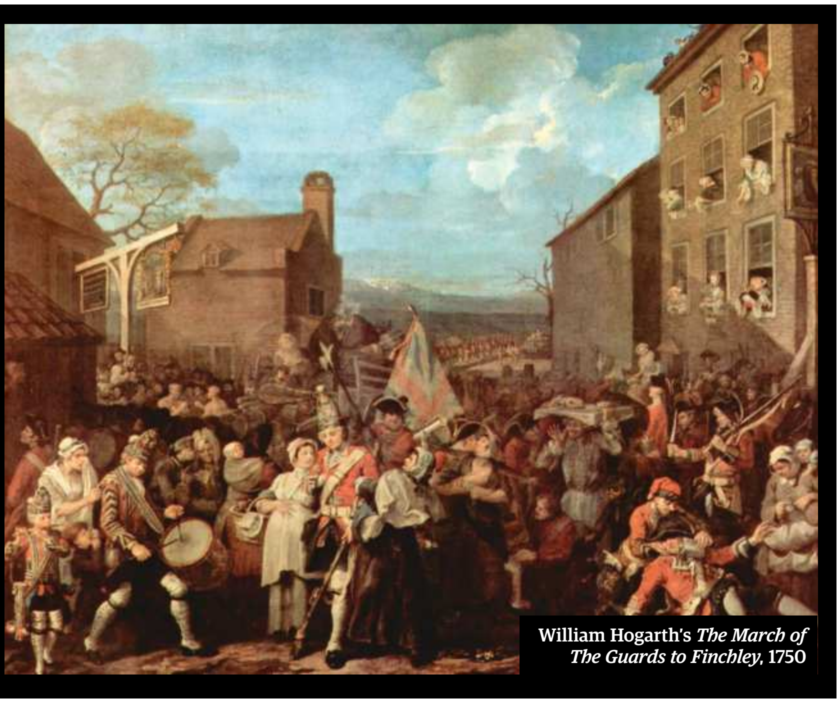
The terror of the Jacobites

A picture can speak 1,000 words

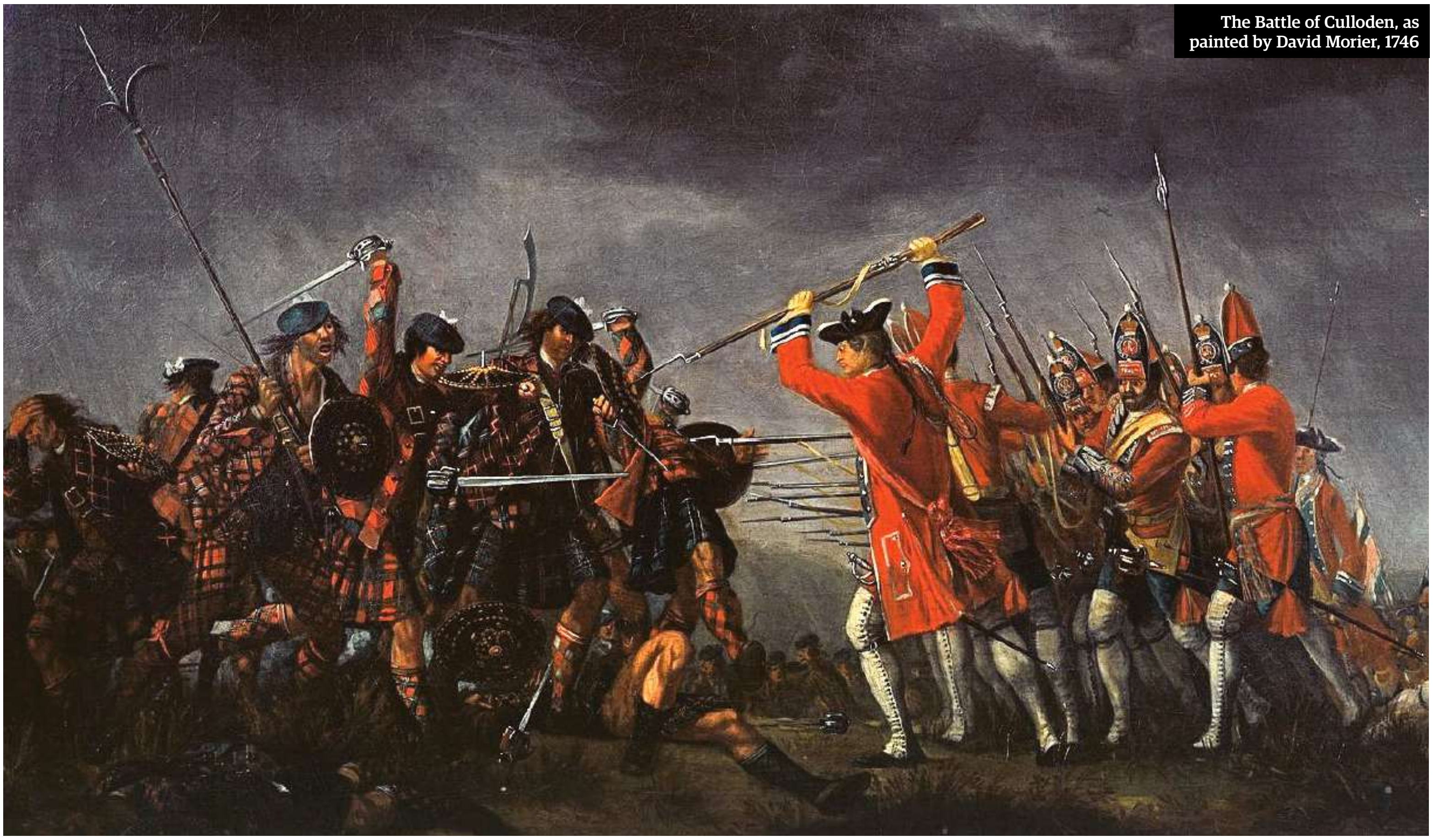
One of the most famous images associated with the '45, Hogarth's painting has been used as evidence of the terror that allegedly gripped London after the news that the Jacobite army had arrived at Derby, and the ensuing chaos in which the troops intending to defend the city were mobilised. The painting was produced years after the rebellion had ended, although the artist warns his fellow Britons to be alert to future plots through the presence of a foppish Frenchman (centre-left), who whispers of support for another rising to a gormless Jacobite sympathiser.

Far from reportage, Hogarth's intended meaning was set down by his friend Jean-André Rouquet, who wrote, "Discipline is less observed in the principal Design, but if you complain of this I must ingenuously inform you, that Order and Subordination belong only to Slaves; for what every where else is called Licentiousness, assumes here the venerable Name of Liberty." Therefore this jumble of rowdy humanity is simply a reflection of the freedoms and liberties of the British people, which can be transformed in an instant, when required, into a disciplined fighting force (seen marching north in the middle distance).

Even boxing, as seen to the left, is in itself a disciplined and manly outlet for this healthy native fighting spirit. The young grenadier guard (centre), flanked by a tearful pro-Hanoverian print seller and a haranguing Catholic Jacobite, personifies Great Britain at a moment of choice, although, in reality, the young Briton has had enough of the bullying crone and is already striding off in step with the much more youthful, fecund and comely wench at his side.



William Hogarth's *The March of The Guards to Finchley*, 1750


The Battle of Culloden, as painted by David Morier, 1746

which had arisen the errors and misfortunes of the reign of his ancestor, James the Second of England."

This faith in his regal prerogative, coupled with a "temper naturally haughty and cold", led, in Scott's opinion, to a fundamental disinterest in the suffering of his followers and "an indulgence in rash and sanguine hopes, which could only be indulged at an extravagant risk to all concerned. It was the duty of every subject to sacrifice everything for his Prince, and if this duty was discharged, what results could be imagined too difficult for their efforts?" Such a characterisation lies behind the imperious figure of the prince, as depicted in John Pettie's famous painting, *Bonnie Prince Charlie Entering The Ballroom At Holyroodhouse* of 1892.

But these negative traits were not evident, or at least not mentioned, by the prince's supporters prior to 1745. John Murray of Broughton, Charles' principle secretary during the '45, described the prince in the preceding year as: "tall, above the common Stature, his Limbs are cast in the most exact Mold, his Complection has in it somewhat of an uncommon Delicacy; all his Features are perfectly regular and well turn'd, and his Eyes the finest I ever saw; but that which shines most in him, and renders him without Exception the most surprisingly handsome Person of the Age, is the Dignity that accompanies his every Gesture; there is indeed such an unspeakable Majesty diffus'd through his whole Mien and Air, as it is impossible to have any Idea of without seeing, and strikes those that do with such an Awe as will not suffer them to look upon him for any time, unless he emboldens them to it by his excessive Affability."

"Reports of the Stuart heir's beauty, elegance, courtesy and majesty were a vital element of their PR campaign"

Furthermore, Charles was a happy combination of "the good Nature" of the Stuarts with the "Spirit" of his Polish Sobieski forefathers – his mother, who had died in 1735, was Princess Maria Clementina Sobieska – and therefore "equally qualified to preside in Peace and War".

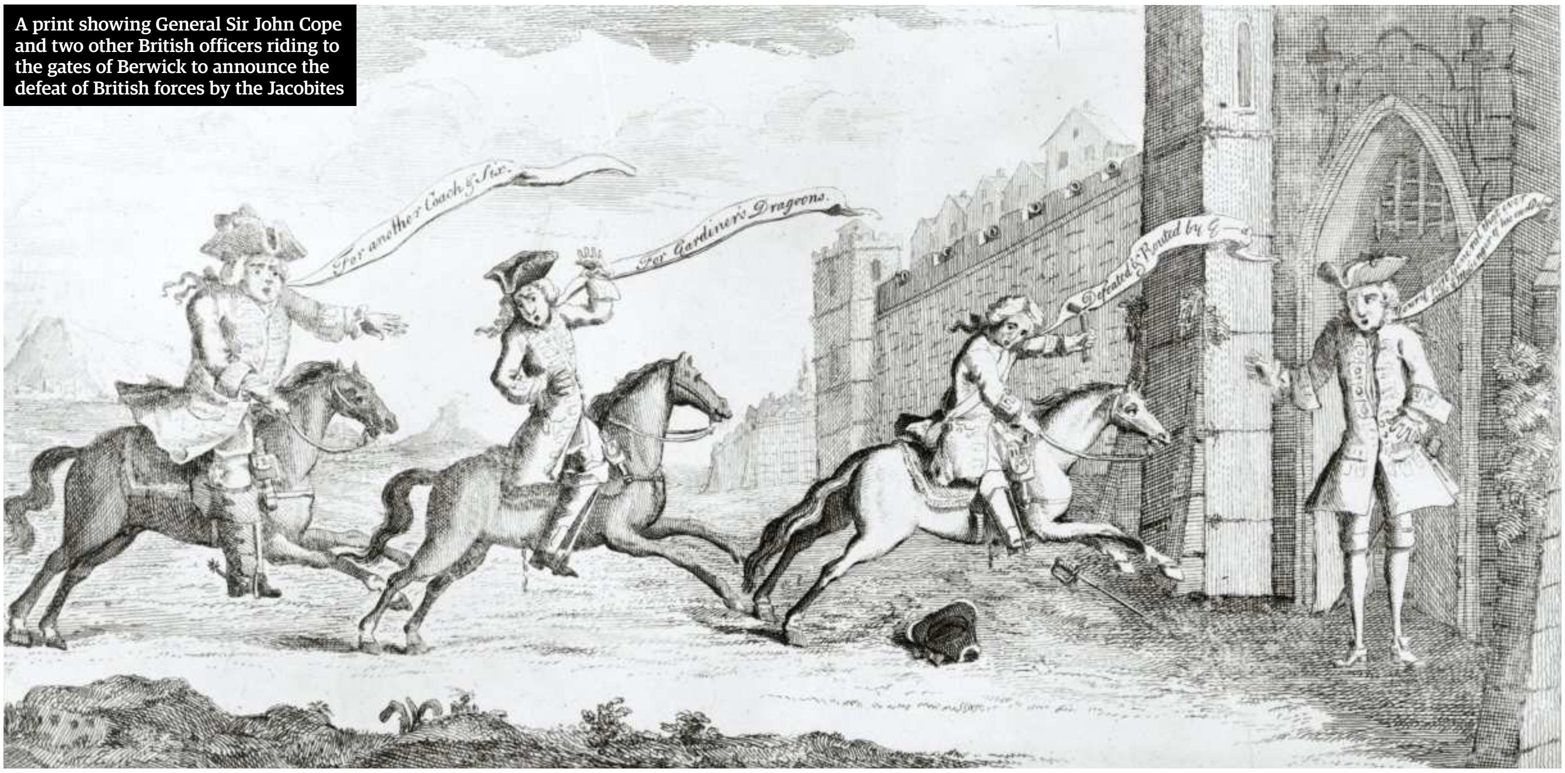
Murray was clearly starstruck when he wrote this, but his reaction was by no means unique. In 1739, Samuel Crisp recalled seeing Charles at a ball in Rome, declaring, "I never saw any thing so genteel … his looks, his gesture, all was the finest, & most expressive that can be imagin'd."

Charles was, demonstrably, a key weapon in the Jacobite arsenal. While in exile, such reports back home of the Stuart heir's beauty, elegance, courtesy and, above all, majesty, were a vital element of their public relations campaign, keeping the dynasty not only alive in the hearts and minds of their distant 'subjects' but preparing the ground for their joyous and longed-for return. A regular visitor to the Palazzo del Re, the Stuart headquarters in Rome, the French author Charles de Brosses recalled: "Both princes are passionately fond of music, and are finished musicians. The elder plays the violoncello, and once a week they give a concert, by far the best in Rome, and at which I never fail to be present. Yesterday, I entered the room as they were executing the celeberated composition of Corelli, the Notte Di Natale [the Christmas Concerto], and expressed my regret at not having heard the commencement. When it was over, they were going to commence a new piece when Prince Charles stopped them, saying, 'Stop, I have just heard that Mons. Desbrosses wishes to hear the last composition complete.' I give this little anecdote with pleasure, as it manifests at once a true spirit of politeness and a kindness of disposition."

The young Charles Stuart emerges as not only charming and physically attractive, but one who can stimulate admiration and even adoration in his followers – excellent traits for the mastermind of an audacious restoration attempt.

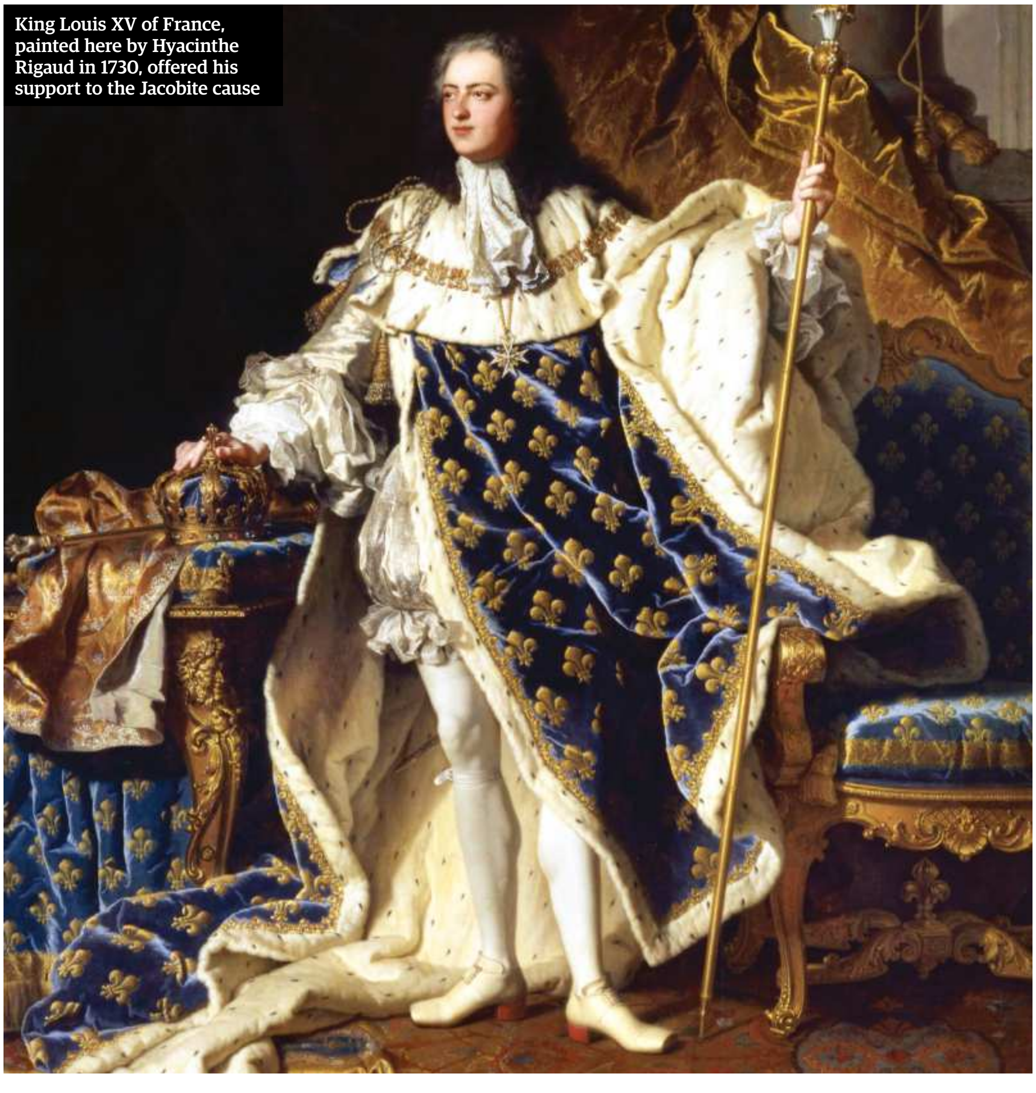
And the Stuart prince did not disappoint on his arrival in Scotland in 1745. While in Edinburgh, Christian Thriepland described Charles in a letter to a friend as "the blessed Object."

"O!" she continues, "had you beheld my beloved Hero, you must confess he is a Gift from Heaven",



A print showing General Sir John Cope and two other British officers riding to the gates of Berwick to announce the defeat of British forces by the Jacobites

For another Coach & Six.
For Gardiner's Dragoons.
Defeated & Routed by G—



King Louis XV of France, painted here by Hyacinthe Rigaud in 1730, offered his support to the Jacobite cause

and that "he is the Top of Perfection and Heaven's Darling." She concludes, "He continues to make Friends wherever he comes, and has got the better of his Ill-wishers, and is like to have more Friends than he can well employ … O would [to] God I had been a Man, that I might have shared his fate of Well or Wo, never to be removed from him!"

Christian was from a staunch Jacobite family, so her ardour is to be expected. However, even those who would be considered enemies of the Stuarts found themselves beguiled by him. Magdalen Pringle, from a Whig family in Edinburgh, admitted, "In all my Life I never saw so noble nor so Graceful an appearance as His Highness made." She then observes, "I don't believe Cesar was more engagingly form'd nor more dangerous to the liberties of his country than this Chap may be, if he sets about it."

Even John Home, a loyal supporter of King George who became a British army volunteer during the rebellion, acknowledged that the "figure and presence of Charles Stuart were not ill suited to his lofty pretensions." Home continues: "He was in the prime of youth, tall and handsome" and "rode well, and looked graceful on horseback."

In Rome, Charles was described as fit and active, spending days on horseback hunting and shooting. This proved vital training not only for the rigours of a military campaign but to appear to his British public every inch the royal leader and commander.

Such keen attention as to how he appeared in public and to what effect continued through to his mode of dress. Throughout the '45, Charles alternated his appearance from a fashionably and luxuriously dressed European prince to that of a tartan-clad Highland chief. The former persona was utilised when he was presiding over court entertainments and business, while the latter could be seen marching with his men, often on foot, or in battle. This shift in presentation was directly connected to the need to appeal to as broad a British following as possible – whether Highlanders, Lowlanders or English – while visibly representing the two key elements of the ideal royal leader: that is one who is equally at ease in peace and war.

As important as it was, looking the part could only take the prince so far. Despite his obvious charisma and striking physical appearance, there were major issues regarding his character and experience. Until 1738, Lord Dunbar had held the important role of governor to Prince Charles, a responsibility he shared with an Irishman, Sir Thomas Sheridan, as under-governor. These men were crucial in the forming of Charles' character.

That his education was not all that it could or should have been is stated by several people who met him. Charles de Brosses, while admitting to the prince's many positive traits, observed that both Charles and his brother Henry "had but a mediocre wit, and are less polished than princes should be at their age."

The young Scottish Jacobite David Wemyss, Lord Elcho, recalled of Charles that "Lord Dunbar is a man of the world and should have been able to give him a better education, which he is accused of having neglected; Sir Thomas Sheridan is an ardent Papist with no knowledge of how England is governed, and who holds the loftiest notions about the divine right of kings and absolute power."

One Stuart courtier in Rome, responding to such criticisms, said of the prince that "Tis true his Education has not been in every particular such as a person of his rank is supposed generally to have," but continues, "Yet by a good fund of sense people will see that nature has supply'd whatever may have been wanting in care and industry."

The reading material that is listed among Charles' baggage, sent to Nantes in May 1745 by one of his key aides, John William O'Sullivan, in preparation for his covert journey to Scotland, is certainly intriguing. It includes Voltaire's *Letters Concerning The English Nation*, the works of Machiavelli and *L'Art De La Guerre Par Le Marquis De Guise*. Such reading suggests that the 24-year-old prince may have realised, possibly too late, that his knowledge of both military tactics and the country he felt destined to rule was poor, or at least filtered through the subjectivity of others: regarding the English character, a Frenchman.

While living for many months incognito in Paris, prior to journeying to Scotland Charles wrote to his father that he had been reading more during this short period than he had done in his entire life, for, he states, his whole focus was to restore his father to the throne and, until that was achieved, he would think of nothing else. However, this does suggest that his commitment in youth to learning military theory, tactics and even statecraft had not been as great as his evident love of field sports.

Perhaps more troubling in regard to his readiness for any restoration attempt or, indeed, assuming his 'rightful' position as Prince of Wales and heir apparent to his restored father, Charles appears to have been kept away from the inner workings of the Jacobite operation in Rome. He did not take his place at his father's council meetings until he was almost 20 and was therefore, perhaps, abandoned for too long to the advice and opinions of a small coterie of men, including his tutor Sheridan, which could have had a significant impact on his attitude and behaviour in Scotland.

Charles cannot be wholly blamed for having a suspicious streak given the circumstances under which he had been raised in Rome – clandestine meetings with the faithful, constantly watched by British government spies and informers, some of whom were almost certainly working as servants within the Palazzo del Re.

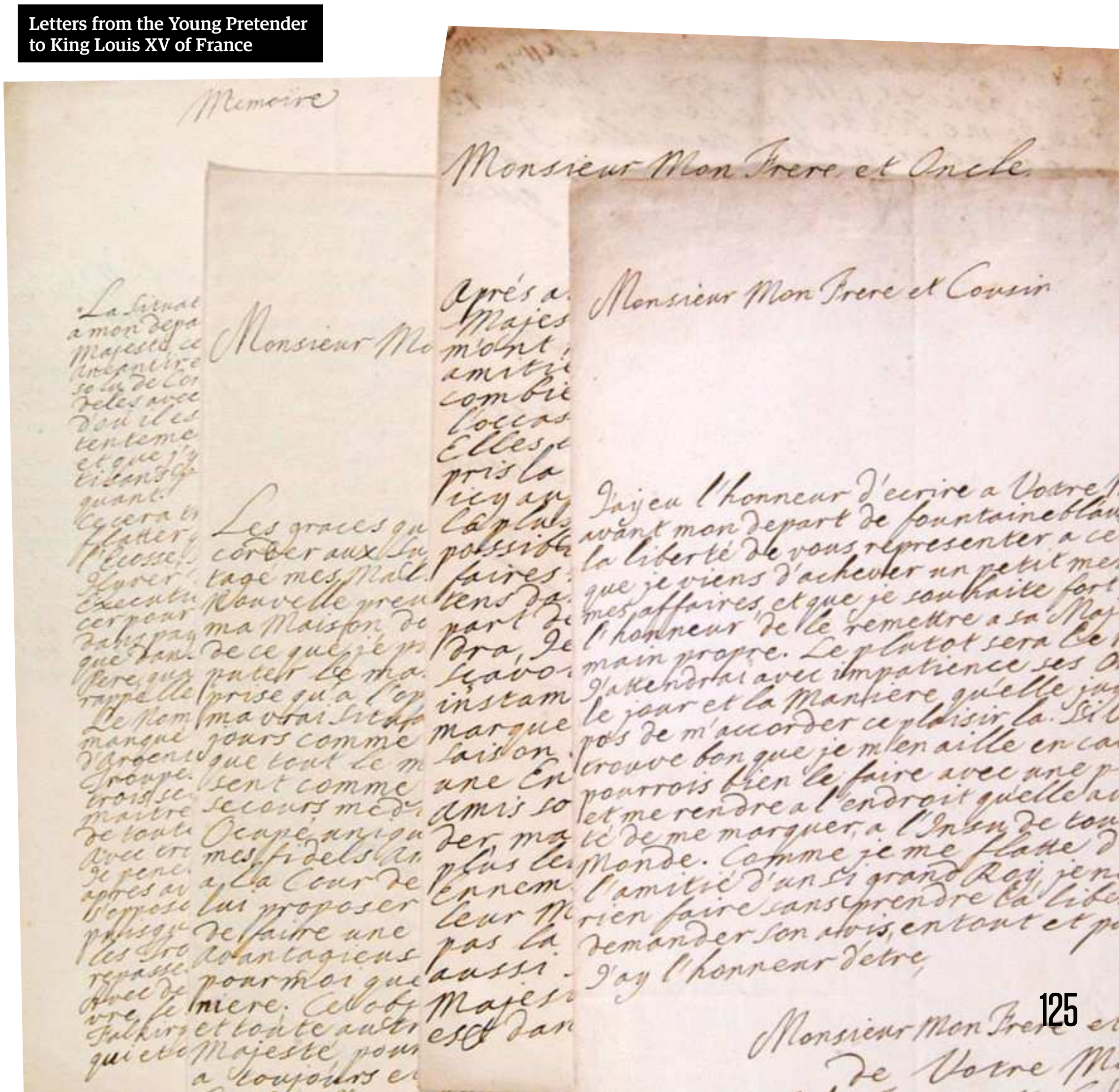
However, when he was challenged, or just simply asked to consider another opinion, he would be affronted and then fall back on the advice of a select few, which included Sheridan, who may not have been objective enough or wise enough to give him good counsel. No doubt being kept away from information and decision-making until so late in his young life, he had not learned to accept counsel with good grace, or gained the experience to judge good or bad counsel when he was given it.

De Brosses also provides us with a very important observation regarding Charles' life in Rome, many years prior to the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. After stating that Charles "is beloved by the whole household for his courage and kindness of disposition", he goes on to judge that Charles "feels deeply the oppressive character of his present position, and, should he not one day be relieved from that oppression, a want of enterprise will certainly not be the cause."

From observing and talking to Charles, De Brosses clearly sensed the deep frustration – even despair – of a prince in exile. He also suggests that Charles was preparing for a restoration attempt and, in the Frenchman's prophetic opinion, had the wherewithal, personally, to drive such an audacious attempt forward.

De Brosses further hints at the purgatory that must have been daily life for a royal family in exile. What purpose does a king have without a kingdom? Put another way, if there was no prospect

"His whole focus was to restore his father to the throne and, until that was achieved, he would think of nothing else"



Letters from the Young Pretender to King Louis XV of France

Memoire

Monsieur Mon Frere et Oncle

Monsieur Mon Frere et Cousin

J'ay eu l'honneur d'ecrire a Votre
avant mon depart de fountainebla
la liberté de vous representer a ce
que je viens d'achever un petit me
mes affaires, et que je souhaite fort
l'honneur de le remettre a sa Ma
main propre. Le plutot sera le
J'attendrai avec impatience ses O
le jour et la Maniere qu'elle ju
pas de m'accorder ce plaisir la. Si
trouve bon que je m'en aille en ca
pourrois bien le faire avec une p
et me rendre a l'endroit qu'elle
té de me marquer, a l'Insu de tou
Monde. Comme je me flatte d
l'amitié d'un si grand Roy je n
rien faire sans prendre la libe
demander son avis, en tout et p
J'ay l'honneur d'etre,

Monsieur Mon Frere e
De Votre M

Casualties at Culloden

What happened after the battle?

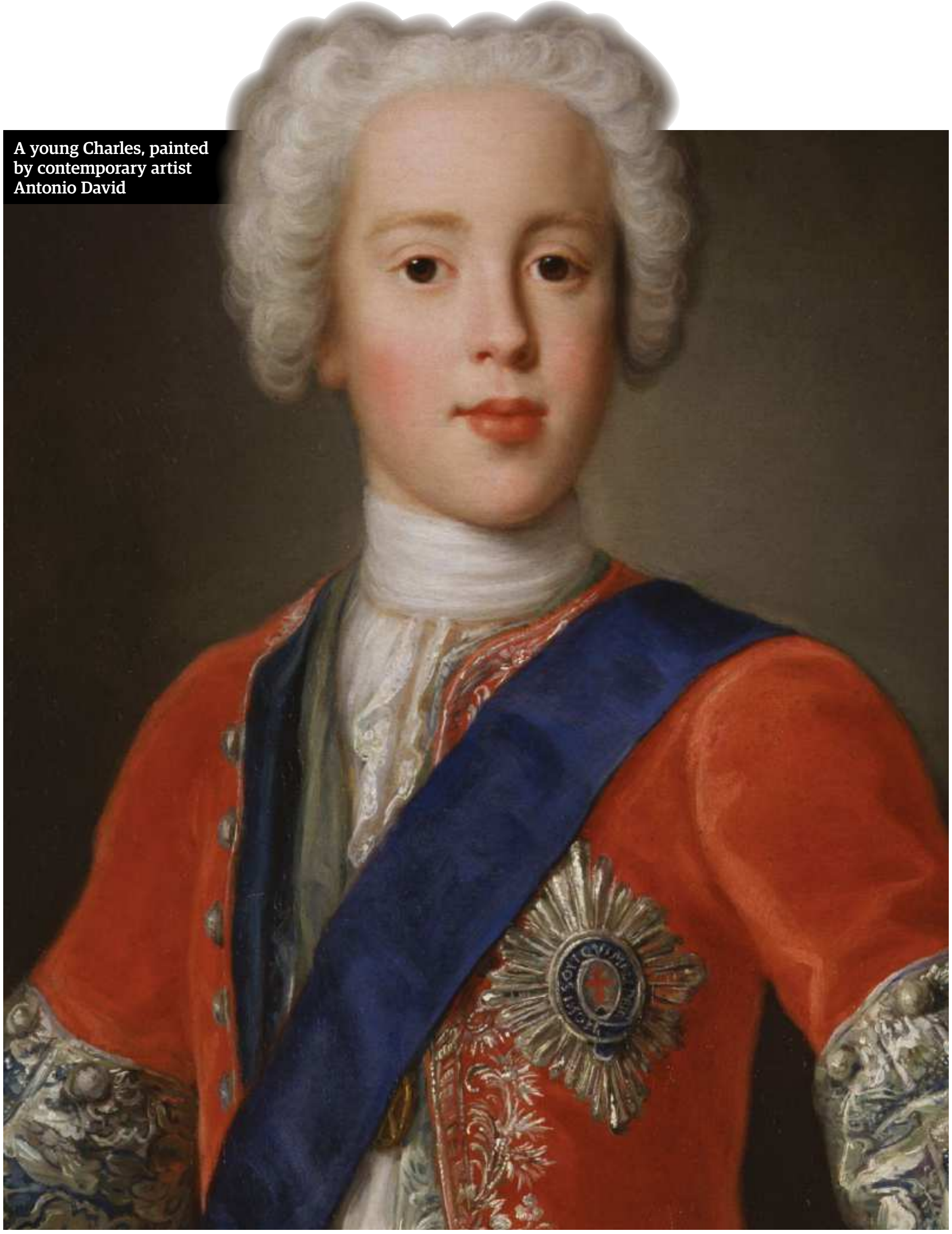
3,472
Jacobites arrested

1,300
were released without trial

900
deported to America

240
accused of high treason
(nobility were beheaded, commoners were hung, drawn and quartered)

120
sentenced to death



A young Charles, painted by contemporary artist Antonio David

of a restoration or even an attempt to deliver it, what was the point of Charles Edward Stuart? From De Brosses' observation, even Charles himself might respond: none whatsoever. His daring or reckless actions in the summer of 1745, depending on your viewpoint, confirm this.

If we turn to key decisions that can be retrospectively judged as pivotal to the progress of Charles' campaign, how personally responsible was the prince for them? It was certainly Charles' decision to leave Edinburgh for England against the advice of a majority of his Scottish commanders, who wanted to consolidate their hold on Scotland. Charles, on the other hand, clearly saw London as his greatest prize, in tandem with all the Stuarts' former territories, not just Scotland. He was convinced that an English and Welsh rising would occur once he entered England. This decision, although far from disastrous in itself, revealed the dramatic disjuncture between some of Charles' core advisers and himself – and so dangerously early in the campaign.

This situation came to a crisis at Derby, where another fateful decision was made. Charles was for proceeding, using their speed and the element of surprise to reach London, while hoping that English Jacobites would finally rise in great numbers as they advanced ever closer to the capital. The exiled Stuarts had been consistently led to believe by their agents that London, particularly its financial heart, was a Jacobite stronghold.

The long-promised French invasion of the southeast of England, which was very near to being launched – although Charles was unaware at the time – could have sealed the victory, despite the army gathering on Finchley Common to defend London. Politically, this scenario does make some sense. Despite its size, the Jacobite army had succeeded beyond everyone's imagination, achieving an almost mythic, invincible reputation in the process – a reputation that could have carried it all the way to London.

Militarily, however, an advance was looking less appealing by the day. No one could guarantee an English rising and, given that two armies were now converging on them from the north and west, coupled with another rumoured force to the south, any delay in the retreat would mean their route back to Scotland would be cut off. The Jacobite army, still around 6,000 in strength, would need to defeat each British army contingent in turn.

Even if they defeated the troops lying ahead of them and marched into London, how, given no sign of pro-Stuart support, might they hold on to it? Besides which, the Scottish commanders were keen to return to their homeland and recoup and entrench their gains there. England had shown little interest in supporting the cause, so why should they continue to risk their lives for her?

The retreat from Derby allowed the Jacobite army to fight another day, in fact doubling its strength after successful recruitment to their ranks in the north of Scotland. But it broke what little trust was left between the prince and his Scottish commanders and, crucially, the myth of the Jacobite army was thoroughly dispelled.

More important still, the retreat told the British government that Charles had not been in recent contact with the French Court.

Charles took the retreat personally as a profound blow to his authority and the Stuart cause. From then on his behaviour transformed. No longer was he the inspiring leader rising early to plan the day, drilling his men and marching alongside them as seen in the advance south. Now he refused to call another council meeting and even actively delayed the army setting off each day by rising late only to gallop off on horseback.

The final key decision was to fight the Duke of Cumberland's army on 16 April. This, as far as can be ascertained, was Charles' choice. It followed immediately on from an aborted night attack, by which the Jacobite army attempted to march to the British army's encampment near Nairn to destroy it. The Jacobite troops left Culloden too late, meaning that the vital element of surprise under cover of darkness could not be achieved.

The army then had to return to the area around Culloden, only to hear on arrival that the British army forces were already marching towards them. The Jacobites were not in a fit state to fight. With major supply issues and a dwindling war chest, Charles seems to have resolved to risk everything in a final throw of the dice. If luck was with him then the decision would be considered audacious and he would be celebrated for it. If it went against him, then at least there would be an end to their current, desperate circumstances, allowing for another attempt to begin.

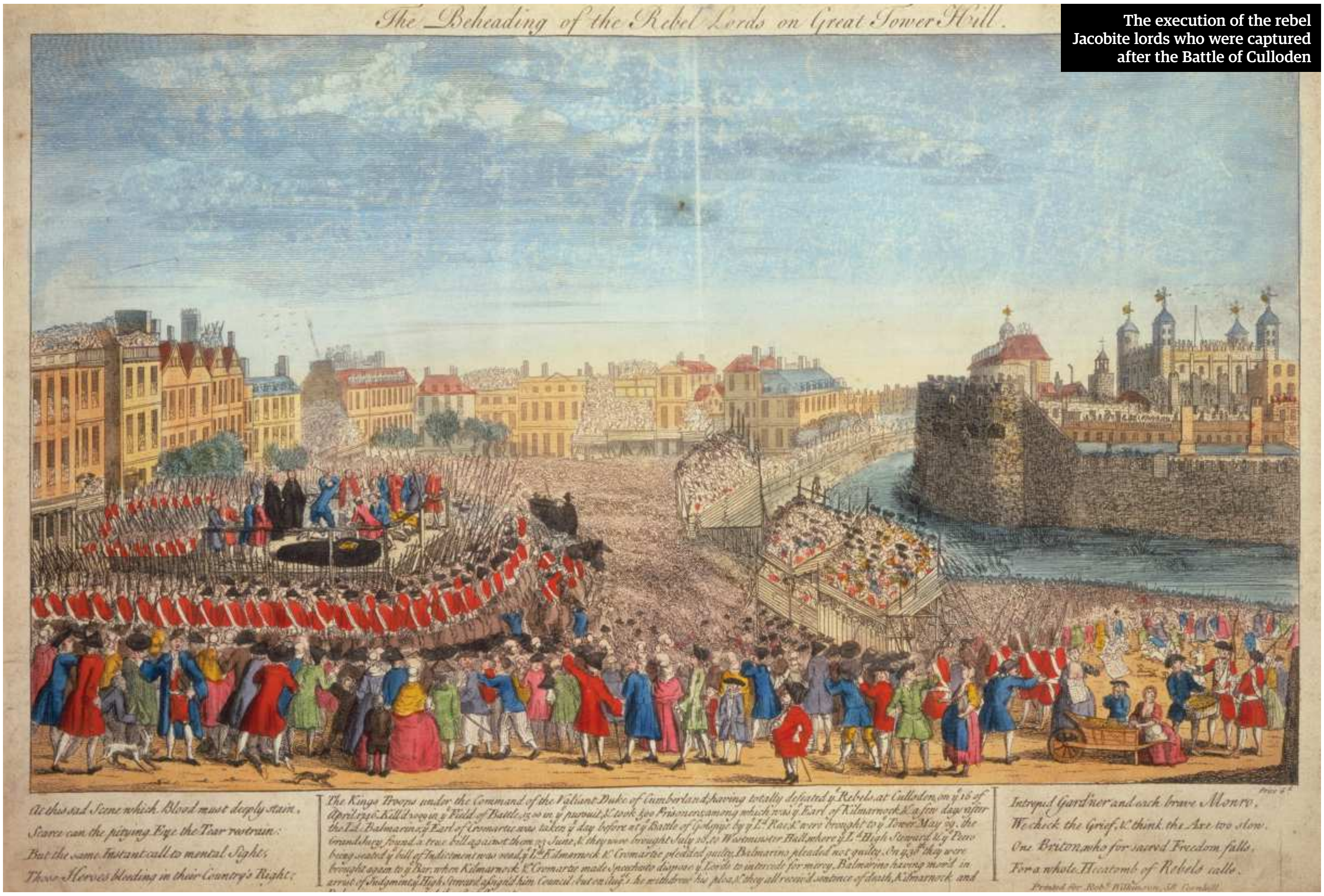
> "He was convinced that an English and Welsh rising would occur once he entered England"

The Jacobite army did not have time to form up on their chosen ground but instead gathered to the west and in a far less advantageous position. At the first cannon blast signalling the beginning of the battle the odds were stacked against them.

As it became clear that the battle on Culloden Moor had been lost, Charles escaped the field. The defeat was a disaster, but his capture would have been catastrophic. On the run and with no certain intelligence as to where his commanders and troops were, Charles declared his intention to take the first ship he could find to France – not through cowardice, but to demand the men, money and arms that King Louis had promised him.

However, through no fault of his own, fate would delay his departure for five months, during which time he was a hunted fugitive. In the meantime, the pacification of the Highlands, seen as fertile ground for any future rising, was rolled out. By the time Charles arrived in France, two rebel lords had been beheaded at Tower Hill in London – the infamous Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, followed in 1747, while many more had been hanged or hanged, drawn and quartered. Hundreds awaited trial in English prisons, with transportation as indentured servants to the West Indies a very real and terrifying prospect.

The 1745 Jacobite Rebellion is one of the great 'what ifs' of British history, but whatever failures of strategy, planning or leadership that can be levelled at Charles, for over a year his campaign wasn't only the focus of attention across Europe – in many ways, albeit briefly, it set the agenda on the European and even world stage.


The Beheading of the Rebel Lords on Great Tower Hill.
At this sad Scene which Blood must deeply stain,
Scarce can the pitying Eye the Tear restrain:
But the same Instant call to mental Sight,
Those Heroes bleeding in their Country's Right:
Intrepid Gard'ner and each brave Monro,
We check the Grief, & think the Axe too slow.
One Briton, who for sacred Freedom falls,
For a whole Hecatomb of Rebels calls.

The execution of the rebel Jacobite lords who were captured after the Battle of Culloden

©Alamy, Getty, TopFoto

Chroniclers of a century

Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn's diaries paint a vivid picture of 17th-century life

There were many reasons in the Stuart period for someone to maintain a written record. There were account books for merchants, notes on treatments for those practising the 17th century's version of medicine and records on state affairs. But the 17th century saw a fashion emerge among many of the educated in English society: the keeping of a written record of all the events in a person's day — a diary.

There were several reasons for this surge in written accounts of one's own life: cheaper paper, higher literacy rates and an inspiring age of curiosities, change and travel. Francis Bacon had recommended that more people should keep a diary, observing, "In sea voyages, where there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries, but in land travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it." But most of all it was the influence of Puritanism that gave rise to diaries. Diaries became popular as a way for a humble Christian to keep a moral account of all the worldly interactions between God and the diary keeper. Ralph Josselin called his diary "a thankfull observation of divine providence and goodness towards me and a summary view of my life" while John Beadle, an English clergyman, penned his *Journey Or Diary Of A Thankful Christian* in 1656.

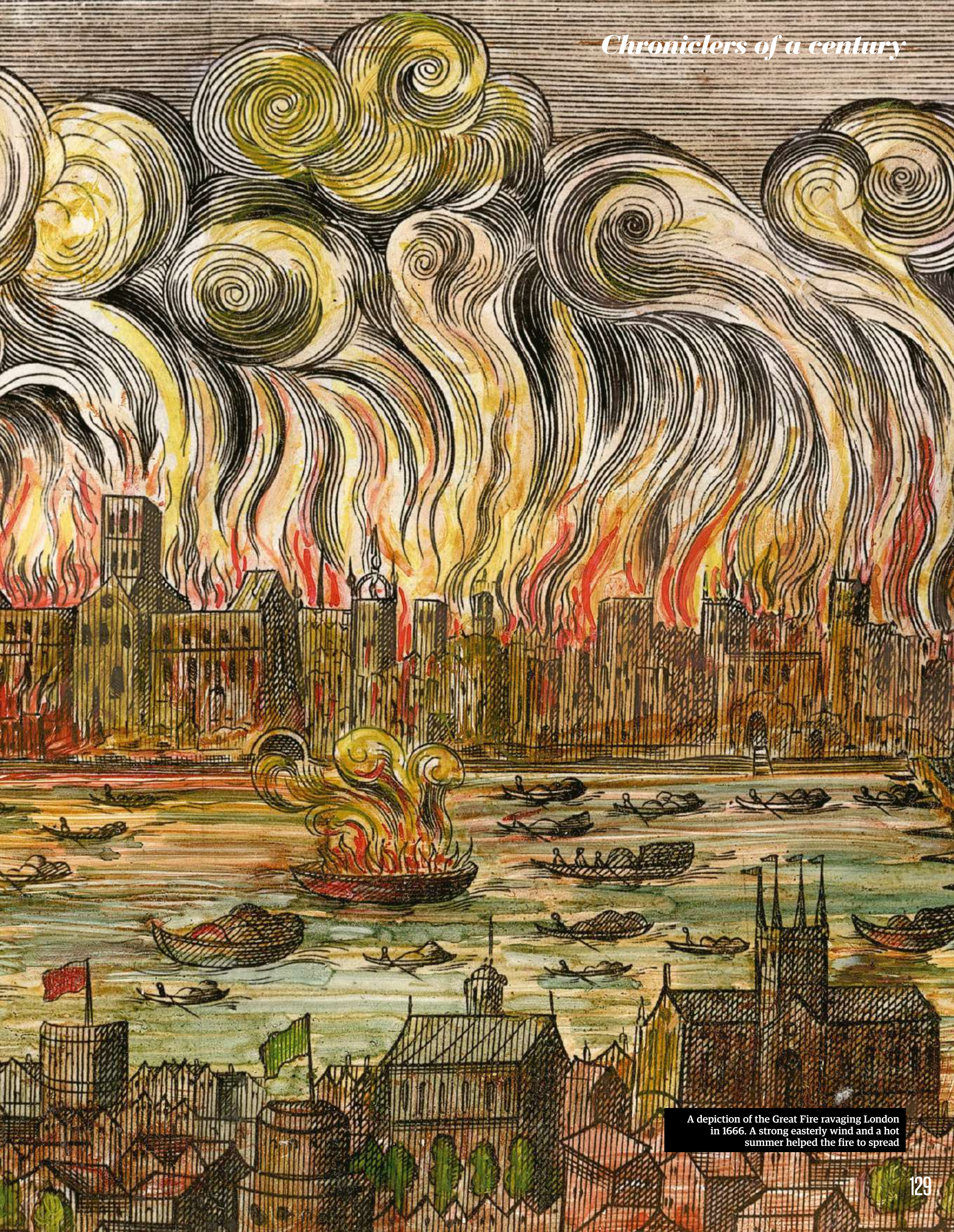
With this, the concept of keeping a diary of private feelings was born, and an entire period was written vividly to life by diarists. They captured every detail of the events, people, feelings and changes experienced by those living through one of the most tumultuous periods in British history, and recorded many of the events that may have been lost in a time of royal censorship. The most famous of these chroniclers of an age are John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys.

Pepys and Evelyn wrote their diaries for different purposes. Evelyn wrote his long-running diary (1641–1706) in clear English and was wont to repeatedly return to previous entries and amend them. While altering diary entries with the use of hindsight feels somewhat dishonest, Evelyn was keenly aware that others would read his diaries after his death, and his revisions seem to suggest that he intended his diaries to be a memoir for future generations.

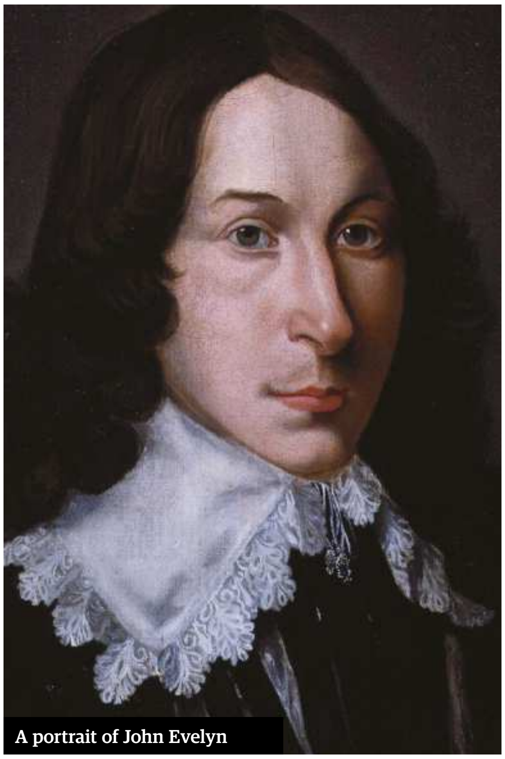
Pepys, whose main diary spanned only nine years (1660–1669), did not alter his entries, nor did he attempt to present himself in a particularly positive light. Pepys records everything, from walks and dinners ("a ham of French Bacon boiled with pigeons" being one of many curious meals) to conversations with the king and arguments with his wife. He admits when he is wrong — something his diary makes clear he was not good at in his normal life — and generally accepts that he is flawed. Pepys viewed himself with the same curiosity that he viewed the outside world.

He also wrote his diary in shorthand that he learnt as a student and threw in Spanish and French phrases for some passages (such as his infidelities), which suggests he did not intend his diary to be read or shared. It seems unlikely that Pepys wrote it as a moral account, not being a Puritan or even especially religious, but was more likely motivated by the momentous changes of the times, coupled with his wide curiosity and desire to remember the things he witnessed.

One of the great advantages of these two men as chroniclers is that they were extremely well connected. During their lifetimes they met and intimately knew people such as Isaac Newton, Charles II, James II and Christopher Wren - not to mention one another, becoming close friends. Their



A depiction of the Great Fire ravaging London in 1666. A strong easterly wind and a hot summer helped the fire to spread



A portrait of John Evelyn

insights into the great and the good of the time are something unique to the diarists. It is not very often that a man from minor gentry can proudly record, "Came his Majesty [Charles II] to honour my poor villa with his presence, viewing the gardens, and even every room of the house, and was pleased to take a small refreshment," as Evelyn did in 1663.

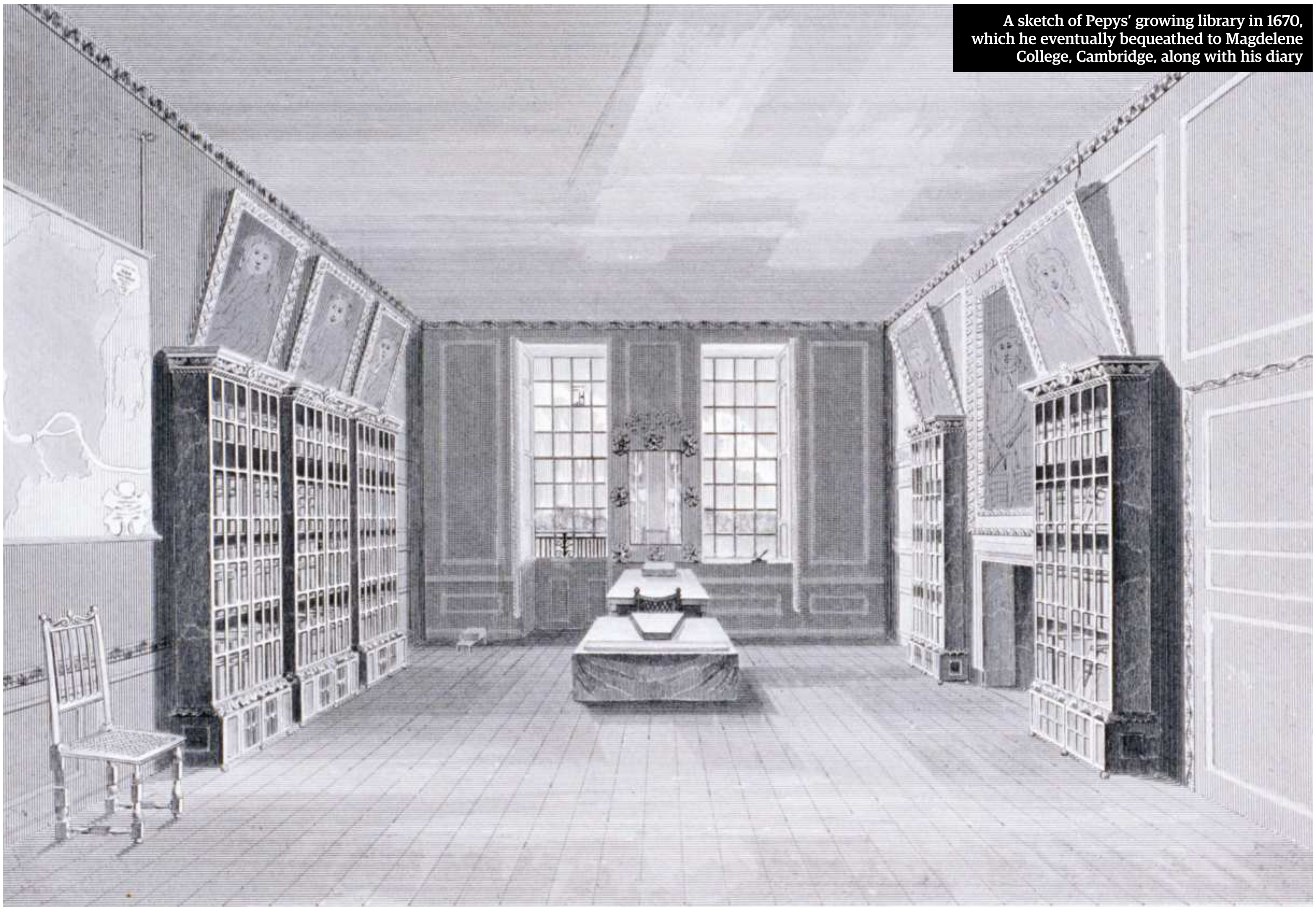
Pepys, meanwhile, having known and worked with the king for years, gave his measure: "I am sorry for it – and can hope for no good for the State from having a king so devoted to his pleasure." This comment is significant considering it was a period that had seen the execution of one king and a continuing suspicion of royal rule. We can today form an image of Charles II as a playboy womanising monarch with the help of Pepys' vivid first-hand impressions.

But a great part of their worth as chroniclers is because of the small details, the reporting of the everyday lives of the lesser mortals in Stuart society. The recording of history has always gravitated towards a few people, usually men, who have ruled or been highly influential. But these diaries have recorded the events in the lives of the servants, shopkeepers, shipwrights and actors who made up their society.

From these more grounded diarists we learn about the servants, many of which were surprisingly well educated and could often read and write. Pepys, for instance, had a manservant by the name of Will Hewer who was literate and even went on to be a wealthy, successful man and one of Pepys' best friends.

Another of the servants in the Pepys household was his wife Elizabeth's waiting woman, Deb Willett. She was educated, could play music and attended the theatre regularly. Her inclusion in Pepys' diary serves to show the education levels of some servants, as well as men's attitudes to women. Pepys, despite his disapproval of the king's affairs, pursued women himself, and Deb was one of the women Pepys pursued until he was caught by his wife. It is revealing about men and women's positions that, having been caught, it is Deb Willett who faced ruin and the loss of reputation.

We can also glean much more about relationships between men and women. While it has been suggested that Pepys' wife Elizabeth was the muse of his diary, he was quite happy to upset her if he felt the need and would rather hear his wife's complaints than allow her more money or freedom. Evelyn similarly adhered to idea of the man as head



A sketch of Pepys' growing library in 1670, which he eventually bequeathed to Magdelene College, Cambridge, along with his diary

> "These diaries have recorded the events in the lives of the servants, shopkeepers and shipwrights who made up society"

of the family. He married his wife Mary when she was 13 years old. It has been suggested he married her so young so he could mould her during her formative years. All too often women have been written out of history, but their roles within family and society are recorded by the diarists.

The 17th century was not only a period of intense political upheaval but also a time of cultural change, with the importation of new things and ideas - not least the introduction of coffee, tea, chocolate and even cannabis. Coffee was an exotic new drink that first appeared in coffee houses in England in 1650, although Evelyn recorded seeing coffee in his time in Oxford years earlier, when a Greek student was "the first that I ever saw drink Caffe, not heard of then in England". Characteristically, Evelyn didn't approve of the "deplorable" habit of men spending their time "drinking of a muddy kind of beverage".

Pepys, however, was an ardent fan of coffee and especially coffee houses. These 'penny universities' served as meeting points and were places of learning, gossip and business. Pepys made regular mention of attending clubs and friends in many of London's 250 coffee houses.

Pepys also mentioned sending for "a Cupp of Tee (a China drink) of which I never had drunk before" in 1660. It wasn't a hit with Pepys, as it takes another seven years to be mentioned again. He also sampled drinking chocolate for the first time in 1661 with wine to cure a hangover.

Imports played a role in London fashion too, of which we learn a great deal from the diarists. Pepys mentions fashion trends ranging from his wife wearing black patches on her face to buying Japanese kimono-style garments that he called "Indian gowns".

London, prospering intellectually, was awash with new inventions and ideas. Pepys spent considerable time in bookshops, as did Evelyn. Pepys told how he was awake until 2.00am out of excitement for a book of drawings showing creatures observed through a microscope. They were both members of the Royal Society — Evelyn was active in establishing it — and their diaries are filled with curious experiments they attended. These are interesting as they illustrate an era of scientific curiosity and the sometimes amateurish way in which the virtuosi went about learning.

There were also some profound events covered in the diaries. The Great Plague's deathly embrace in 1665 is witnessed and lived through by London's diarists, and they evoke the creeping and lingering fear that the plague's spread caused as it ravaged the country. The Great Fire of London a year later is also an event that is brilliantly described by both Evelyn and Pepys.

Pepys and Evelyn stood witness to a multitude of events, people and ideas, and thanks to their devotion to experiencing new things and recording them, we have eyewitness accounts and an insight that we never had in any age before. They took into account and covered in great detail everyone, from the great thinkers to the low schemers, and they offer a window into life in Stuart England.

The burning city in writing

The Great Fire of London was the second of three major catastrophes in three years of thoroughly bad luck for London

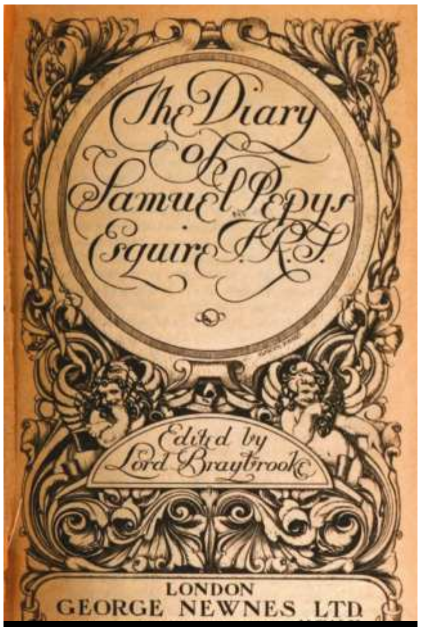
Pepys and Evelyn witnessed the entirety of the fire, and the days of burning that started on 2 September 1666 are recounted in a mix of wonderment and horror. London was something of a muse for both diarists, and its destruction before the diarists' helpless eyes is one of the great moments in the diaries and has helped hold the event in the public imagination.

Fires were common in cities where the buildings were predominantly made of wood and meals were cooked over open fires. This perhaps explains Pepys' initial reaction, which was to judge it far off and return to bed. Indeed, returning to bed seemed to be the common reaction, as even the lord mayor went back to bed, after making his now infamous comment, "Pish! A woman might piss it out!"

But the fire spread, and Pepys and Evelyn both took to boats to watch the damage unfold, in between attending the king to see what could be done. Pepys later encountered the by then awake lord mayor, who was "like a man spent" after failing to slow the fire.

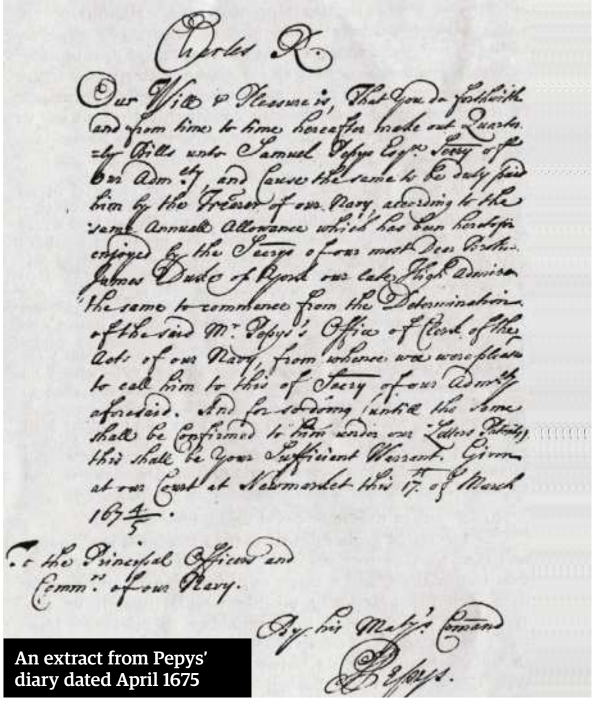
The blaze was huge, and Pepys gives a great sense of the fear and damage, recounting the streets packed with terrified Londoners fleeing with whatever they could carry. He even described how the pigeons "burned their wings and fell down", which attests to the ferocity of the blaze. Pepys then famously buried his wine and parmesan cheese in his garden to protect them from the flames.

Houses in the fire's path were destroyed to halt the spread. Pepys and Evelyn recount in detail the devastation and fear of disease, homelessness and even a foreign invasion in the aftermath. Evelyn was among the first to submit new plans for the regeneration of London, just five days after the blaze.



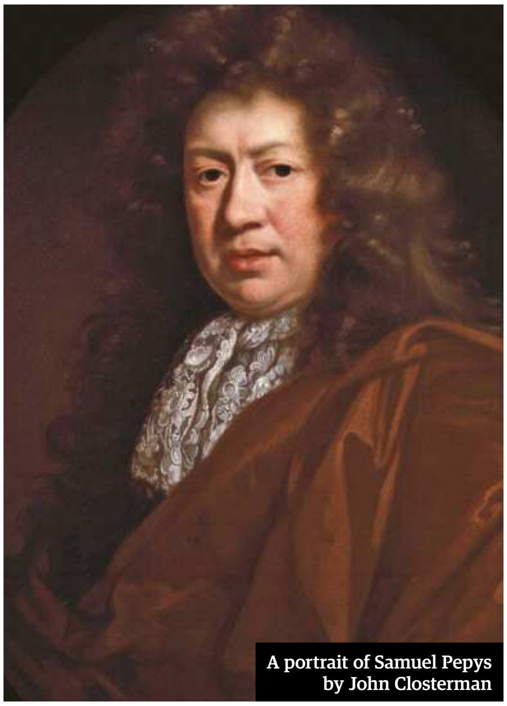
The Diary
of
Samuel Pepys
Esquire F.R.S.
Edited by
Lord Braybrooke
LONDON
GEORGE NEWNES LTD

Samuel Pepys' diary was edited by the Victorians, with many of the more intimate and sexual passages removed



Charles R.
Our Will & Pleasure is, That You do forthwith
and from time to time hereafter make out Quarter
=ly Bills unto Samuel Pepys Esqre Secry of
our Admty, and Cause the same to be duly paid
him by the Treasr of our Navy, according to the
same Annuall Allowance which has been heretofore
enjoyed by the Secry of our most Dear Brother
James Duke of York our late High Admiral
the same to commence from the Determination
of the said Mr Pepys's Office of Clerk of the
Acts of our Navy, from whence wee were pleased
to call him to this of Secry of our Admty
aforesaid. And for so doing (untill the same
shall be Confirmed to him under our Letters Patents)
this shall be your Sufficient Warrant. Given
at our Court at Newmarket this 17th of March
1674/5.
To the Principal Officers and
Commrs of our Navy.
By his Matys Command
S Pepys.

An extract from Pepys' diary dated April 1675

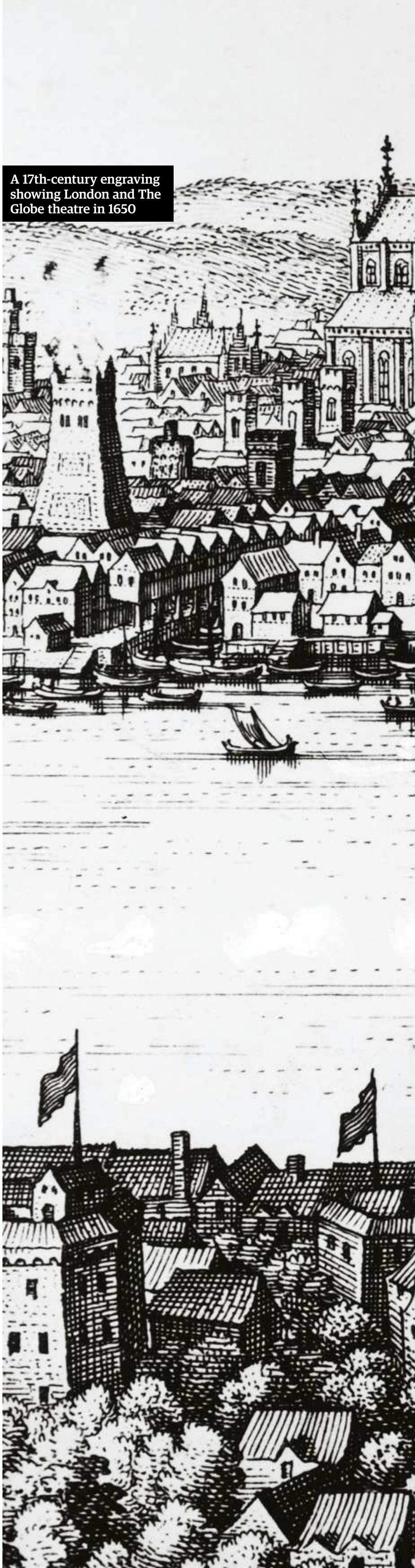


A portrait of Samuel Pepys by John Closterman

©Getty Images

How the other half lived

While the nobility enjoyed their opulent castles, the poor didn't have such a good time of it



A 17th-century engraving showing London and The Globe theatre in 1650

If you lived in Stuart Britain, chances are you were poor, living hand-to-mouth and praying for a good harvest to see you through the winter. The majority of the country wasn't well off, especially after the surge in the population from approximately 4 million in 1600 to 5.5 million 100 years later, which led to a decrease in living standards and a marked increase in poverty and hunger.

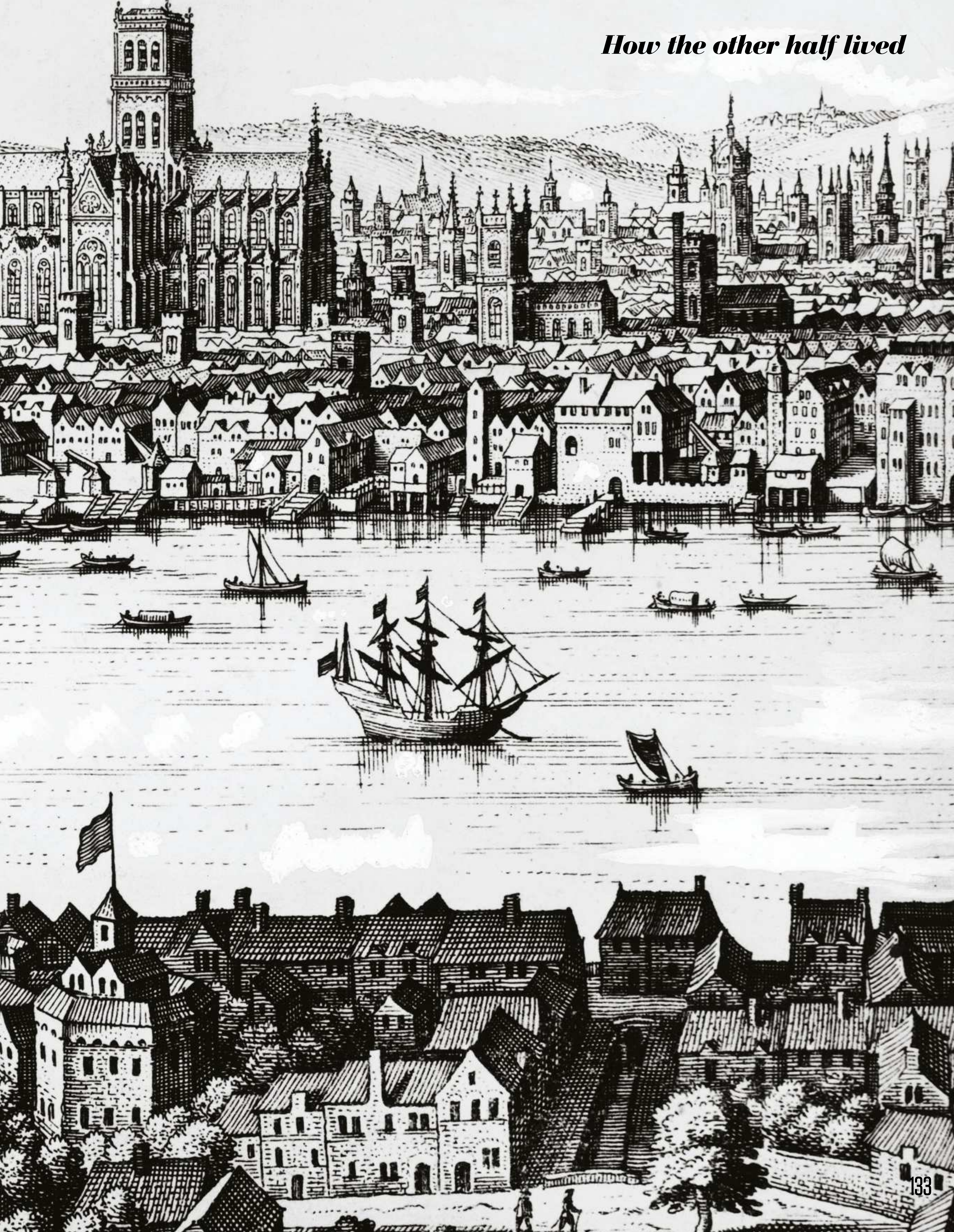
While two-fifths of the labour force were relatively lucky – they worked for a master and so likely had room and board as well as some income – vagrancy was a major problem throughout the period. The poorest of the poor tended to rely on charity in the form of alms or from slightly better off family and neighbours. Some even emigrated to the New World in the hope of a better life - in fact, more people emigrated from Britain than immigrated to it.

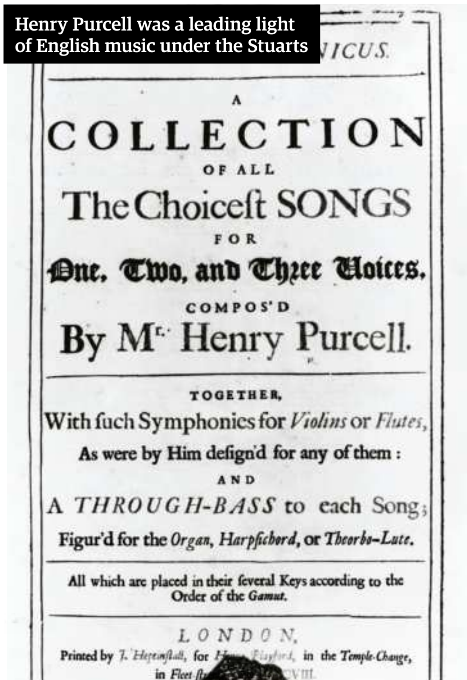
In the first half of the Stuart era not much really changed for the poor and the life expectancy was far from great. Ten to 25 out of every 1,000 women died as a result of childbirth and hygiene wasn't exactly a top priority. Fleas and lice were on everyone – even the upper classes – and it was common to die from worms, plague and dysentery. In direct contrast to the opulent homes of the nobility, 17th-century towns were dirty and unsanitary. Much like under the Tudor dynasty, dirty water and waste were thrown into the narrow streets and everything stank. Some effort was made to rectify this. A piped water supply was created in London but, as you'd expect, you had to pay to be connected to it – not much help for the lower classes.

> Some people living in Stuart England chose to emigrate to the New World in the hopes of a better life

But there were jobs available. Those living in towns and overcrowded cities were anything from shoemakers and smithies to chimney sweeps and street vendors. It was perhaps those living rurally who had the worse deal, doing everything that needed to be done on arable and pastoral farms. You name it, they had to do it: ploughing fields, harvesting crops and mucking out the horses in rain or shine. The going rate was usually about one shilling a day but more specialised jobs sometimes paid higher. The countryside usually demanded more work at peak times like harvest season and haymaking during the summer – probably a godsend for those families who were struggling. Employment wasn't often regular and livelihoods depended on those busy months.

By the end of the 17th century, it was estimated that about half of the population could afford to eat meat every day – they were reasonably well off – while 30 per cent ate meat a few times a





Henry Purcell was a leading light of English music under the Stuarts

ICUS.

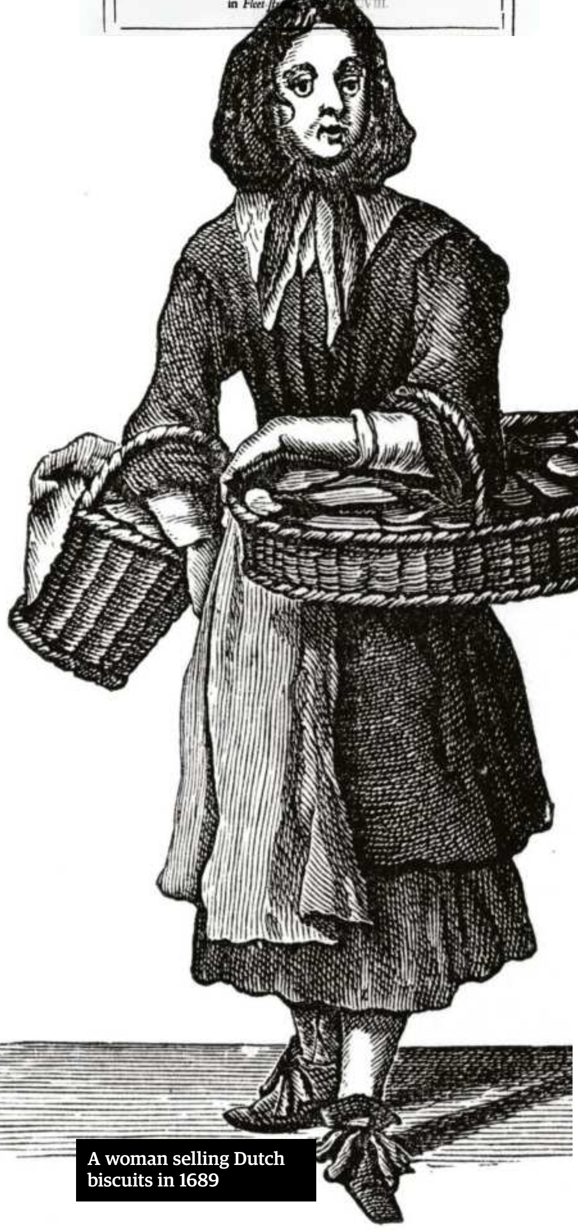
A
COLLECTION
OF ALL
The Choiceſt SONGS
FOR
One, Two, and Three Voices.
COMPOS'D
By Mr. Henry Purcell.

TOGETHER,
With ſuch Symphonies for *Violins* or *Flutes*,
As were by Him deſign'd for any of them :
AND
A *THROUGH-BASS* to each Song;
Figur'd for the *Organ*, *Harpſichord*, or *Theorbo-Lute*.

All which are placed in their ſeveral Keys according to the Order of the *Gamut*.

LONDON,
Printed by *J. Heptinſtall*, for in the *Temple-Change*,
in *Fleet*

You could tell what class someone was from the outside of their house



A woman selling Dutch biscuits in 1689

week. Then there was the last 20 per cent, the very poor, who could only afford meat once a week if they were lucky. Having said that, those living in poverty did have better diets than their rich counterparts – at least by modern standards. They mainly ate vegetables and pottages, while the wealthy flashed their cash by constantly eating meaty, rich foods and copious amounts of sugar-heavy desserts.

For those in the country, their wealth was often determined by the size of their farm – not much really changed for them no matter which monarch they were living under.

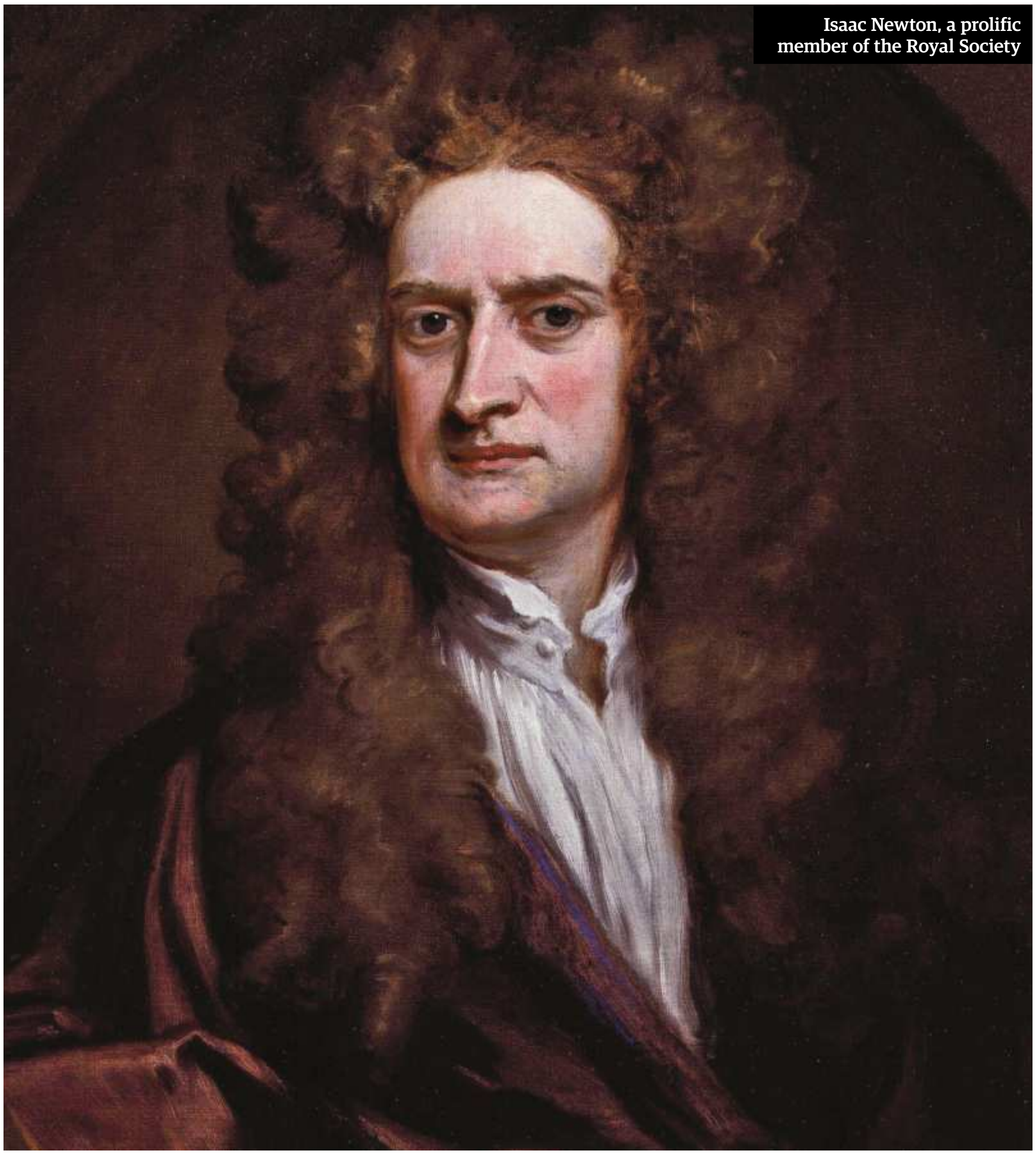
Meanwhile, London found itself expanding over the course of the 17th century. The rich west and the poor east had been separated up until the late Tudor period and the differences between the two were obvious physically and socially. Styles of address, dress, the ordering of public processions and even the order of seats taken in church all indicated where you sat in the social hierarchy. London in particular became much more crowded, and east and west met. As mentioned before, public hygiene wasn't exactly great and a lot of children didn't make it past their third birthdays.

But it wasn't all doom and gloom - there was some fun to be had. The common folk could enjoy dances, music and cock-fighting. For those with some disposable income, coffee was coming over from North America, and they could go and enjoy some plays, much like in the Tudor era. In the early 1600s, William Shakespeare was churning them out along with peers like Thomas Middleton and John Webster. Of course, the rich would take plays one step further and hold masques with elaborate stage designs such as that included in a production of Ben Jonson's *Love's Welcome* in 1634.

Wealth was important in the 17th century and those who began to get more money in the Stuart period heralded the arrival of a middle class - the gentry. These gentlemen weren't necessarily a legally defined group in society but their rise does display the ability for social mobility throughout the era, and they did hold a certain amount of influence and power.

Perhaps one of the main differences between the gentry and the common folk was that the former could afford to have their children educated, leading to lawyers mainly coming from this class, along with military officers and officials of the royal civil service. With their burgeoning libraries and supposedly genteel outlooks, their entertainment began to differ from those lower down the social hierarchy. They could enjoy the new coffeehouses, play board games and attend horse races.

> "The poor mainly ate vegetables and pottages, while the wealthy were constantly eating rich food and desserts"



Isaac Newton, a prolific member of the Royal Society

This was also a class of learning. The gentry was home to the Royal Society, founded in 1660 under Charles II. It was an organisation that pioneered science and learning and is still around today. Some influential members of the time included John Locke, Isaac Newton and Robert Hooke. It was under the Stuarts that William Harvey uncovered the truth of blood circulation and the heart and Issac Newton investigated the refraction of light and, perhaps most famously, discovered gravity. Of course, there was a sprinkling of aristocratic members but, on the whole, it was generally the gentlemen who mingled there.

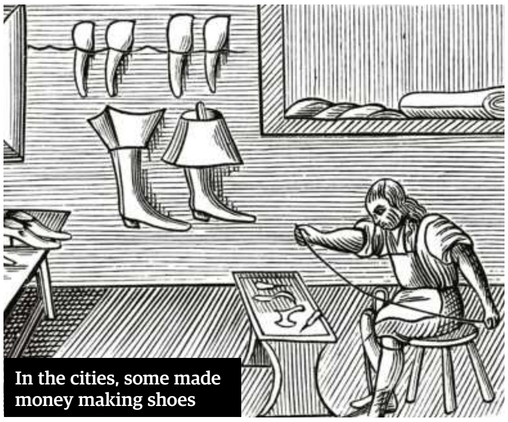
There was a catch, though - to be in this class, you had to prove you had money. Some families went broke from spending to maintain the facade and some became extinct. In fact, in Yorkshire there were 963 known gentry families in 1558–1642. In all, nine were elevated to the peerage, 64 removed from the county and 181 died out in the male line. A further 30 just disappeared from the records. But there were always families willing to replace them: cadet branches, newcomers from other counties, successful lawyers and merchants and young men of yeoman origin building up their lands until they could be recognised as part of the middle class.

Despite all of these differences, the role of women often stayed the same. Gender inequality was regarded as natural throughout the Middle Ages and women had their own roles and jobs. They were bound to obey their fathers and brothers and later their husbands and sons. They ran the household, prepared the food (or ordered the servants to do it if the family had enough money) and raised the children. For the most part they were bound to their husband, but they could leave them if they were wealthy or preferred to live a life of servitude.

However, some women didn't just serve. Elizabeth Knepp was an actress, singer and dancer before her death in 1681. In 1664, she became the first woman to play the titular role in Ben Jonson's *Epicoene*, and Samuel Pepys refers to her in his diaries, talking about how he enjoyed her flirtatiousness and her singing.

Marriage was an important social institution, and according to the 1604 Act for the Due Execution of Diverse Laws and Statutes Heretofore Made Against Rogues, Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggars and Other Lewd and Idle Persons, people "who desert families shall be judged to be rogues". During the reign of Charles II, Thomas Middleton had to provide legal documentation to prove that he wasn't a bigamist and was actually only married to one woman.

While some could argue that there wasn't much change for the common people from the Tudor era to rule under the Stuart dynasty, some differences can be seen. The Royal Society had a knock-on effect for the following periods as they began to revolutionise science and health and the first newspaper, *The Daily Courant*, was published on 11 March 1702 under the reign of the newly crowned Queen Anne. Perhaps things didn't change much for the poor, but with an emerging middle class and so many scientific developments, the foundations were being laid for the future.



In the cities, some made money making shoes

What did the Stuarts do for us?

Starting with an execution and ending with a revolution, the Stuart era changed the face of England forever

The Stuart period is one of the most overlooked in English history, perhaps due to the fact that it follows the infamous figures of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. However, it was one of the most tumultuous of all with civil war, the execution of a king, plague and a fire that destroyed the capital. It also saw the birth of many of the most important and monumental institutions of Britain today.

The Stuart period was the first where science really began to take hold – blind belief was replaced with logic and reason. It was a time of contrasting ideas as witch trials were held on one side of the country, while on the other men of science discovered the basis of blood circulation. It was a time when rules were flouted – scandalous plays broke the mould and women took to the stage for the first time in English history. Ambition drove kings to establish the first overseas colonies, and a force was created that would ensure English domination of the seas for centuries to come – the Royal Navy.

The Stuart period was not simply one of war, beheadings and revolutions – it was also a surprisingly innovative time, where dramatic shifts in thinking would lay the foundation for the greatest empire the world has ever known.

The Scientific Revolution

The Stuart era was home to one of the most exciting and dynamic times for science in the history of mankind – the Scientific Revolution, which saw modern science emerge and develop across Europe with advancements in mathematics, biology, physics, chemistry and astronomy. The revolution not only changed how people thought about science, but also their perceptions of the world, faith and life itself. It was the end of an old kind of science with scholars trying to discover the knowledge of the ancient world – instead, they were encouraged to establish the new.

Stuart England massively contributed to this leap forward in intellectual thought and one of its most notable acts was the formation of the Royal Society. This was, and still is, one of the most important driving forces for advancing scientific beliefs and recognising brilliance.

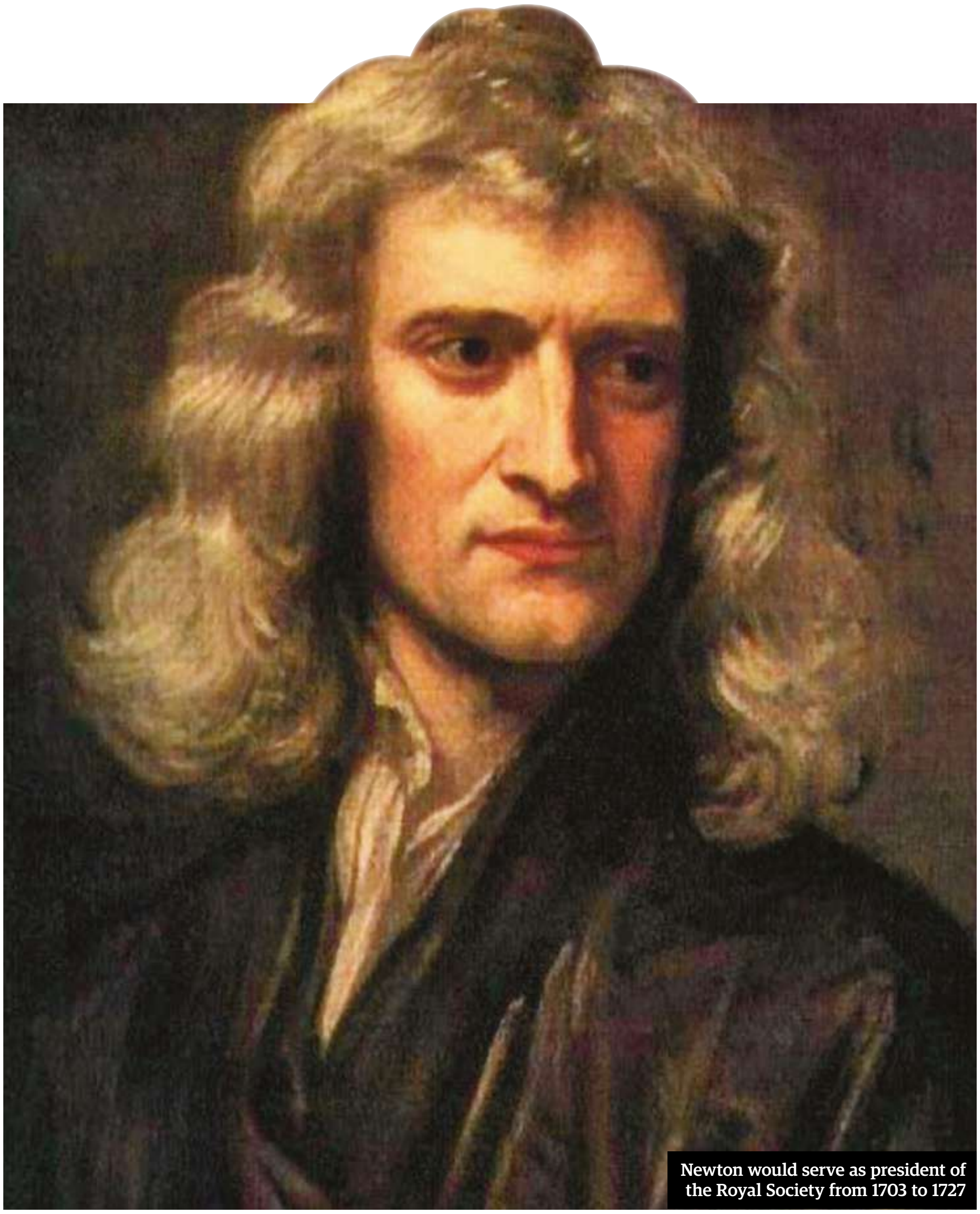
The Society began life as a group of intellectuals who met regularly, inspired by this 'new science', and then developed into a committee that would conduct experiments. When King Charles II caught wind of this exciting group, he gave them his ardent approval and a royal charter to go with it. This set up a precedent of royal support that continues to this day.

With its royal blessing, the society conducted experiments, published essays and generally encouraged the advancement of scientific thought. Notable discoveries included the method by which blood is circulated around the body by the heart by William Harvey and the orbit of a comet, since named Halley's Comet, by Edmond Halley. This free-thinking atmosphere also led to many notable inventions such as experimental science, an early steam engine and the pendulum clock.

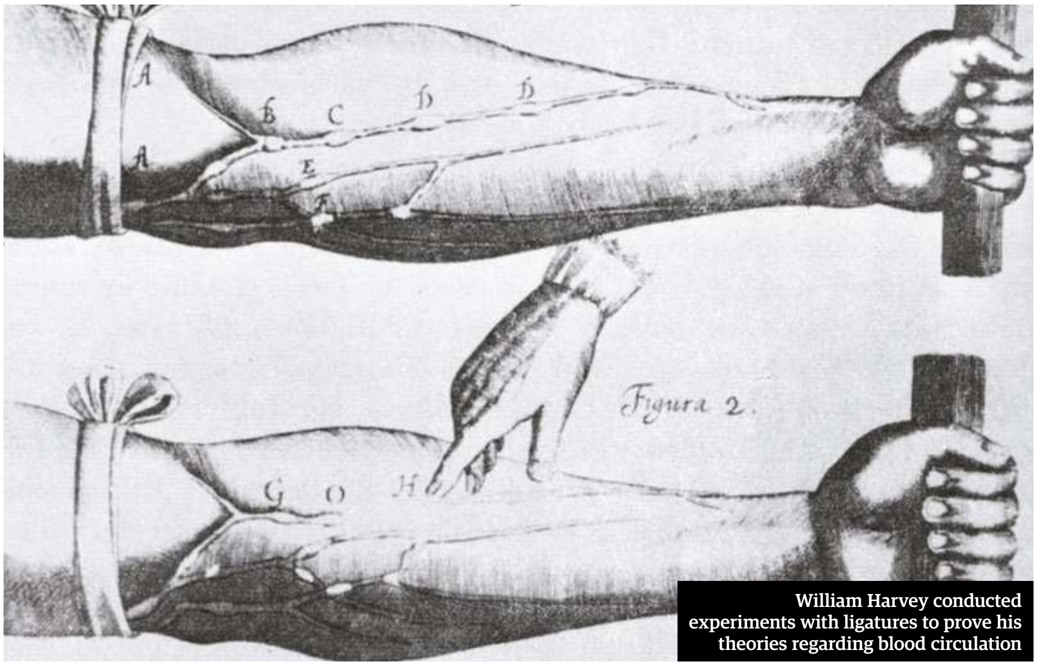
Although England still had some way to go in regards to medicine, there was notable advances in understanding how the human body worked, and interest in medical study increased with the establishment of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh, which gained a European-wide reputation for excellence.

It was thanks to this period of enlightenment that the most famous Stuart scientist of all, Isaac Newton, was able to flourish. First published in in 1687, his book *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* established three simple rules of motion that completely revolutionised how humanity viewed our own universe.

Newton also became famous for his work concerning gravity and calculus, which led to more powerful and accurate ways to solve mathematical equations. Not stopping there, he conducted research into optics and discovered the colour spectrum. Although not all of his work was accepted at the time, Newton was such a heavyweight in the world of science and beyond that he was the first scientist to be knighted.



Newton would serve as president of the Royal Society from 1703 to 1727



William Harvey conducted experiments with ligatures to prove his theories regarding blood circulation

Theatre

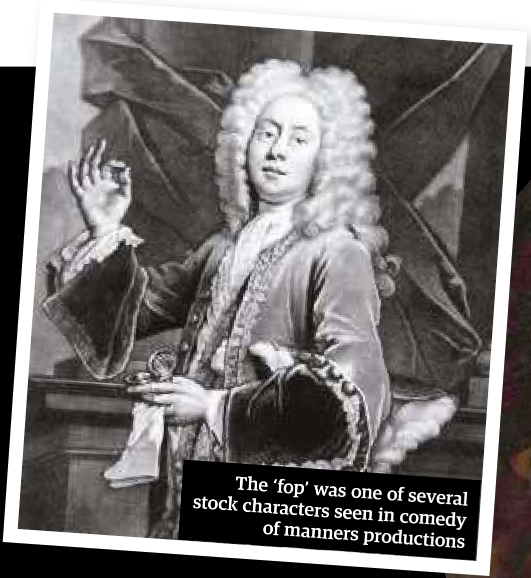
During Oliver Cromwell's tenure, there were harsh Puritan rules against public performances – in fact, they were banned for 18 years. In 1660, however, the theatres finally opened again and England experienced a surge in the creative arts. This was in no small part thanks to Charles II, who had a personal fondness for sexually explicit language and risqué productions.

Playwrights leapt on this renaissance by creating plays about all sorts of 'immoral' activities from gambling to sex. Comedies that touched on very topical subjects didn't just draw aristocrats to the theatre, but also servants and the middle classes.

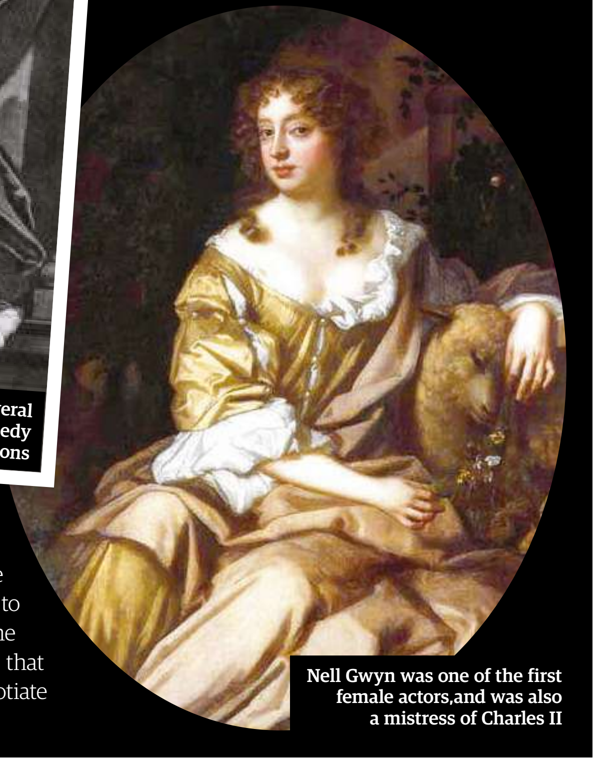
Despite the social conventions and expectations of the time, the stage became a place where one could mock the elite in the name of art. Comedy of manners plays also parodied stock stereotypical characters, often of a particular class, and poked fun at the follies of the era.

This revolution in the theatre saw the first professional actresses take to the stage in female roles that had previously been played by boys. The shock of seeing real women in risqué scenes added to the curious and fiendish delight patrons of the theatre reveled in.

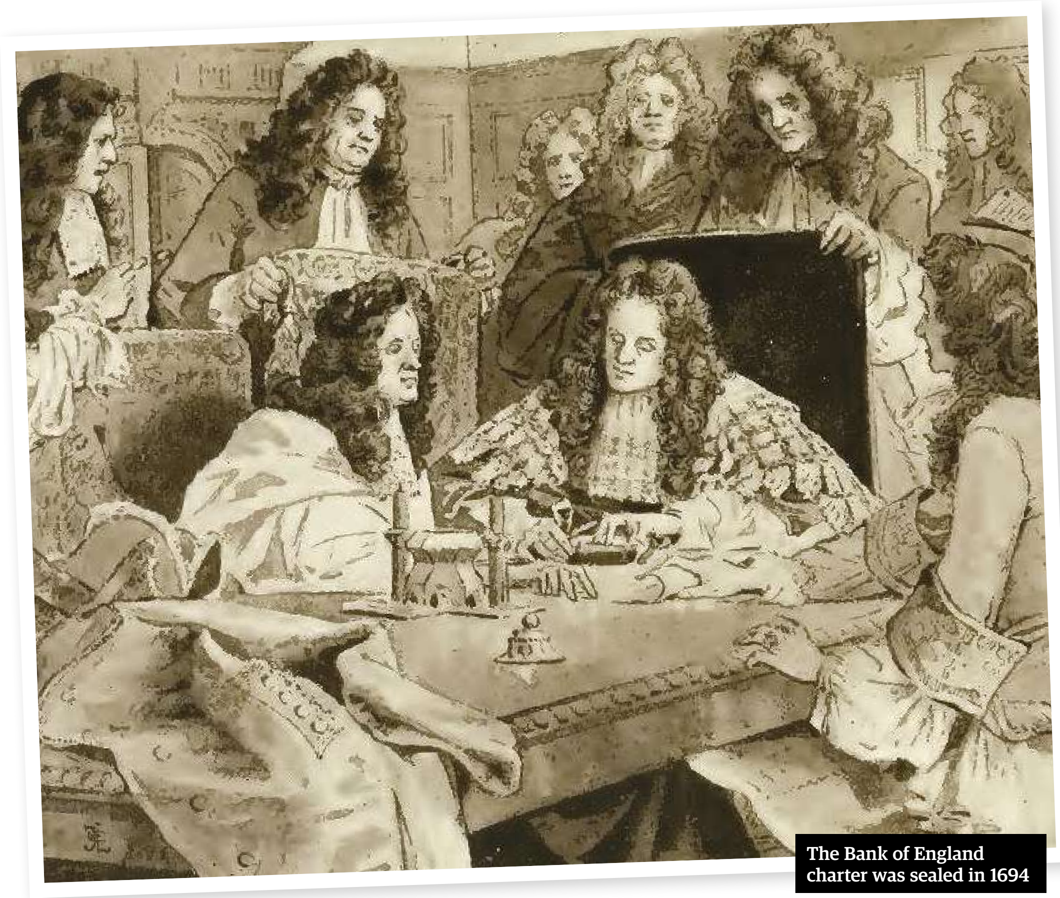
The success of the theatre also gave rise to the first celebrity actors, who were able to draw audiences on the power of their name alone. The notoriety of these actors meant that they could demand more money and negotiate for better deals.



The 'fop' was one of several stock characters seen in comedy of manners productions



Nell Gwyn was one of the first female actors,and was also a mistress of Charles II



The Bank of England charter was sealed in 1694

The Bank of England

In the 1690s, England was experiencing political stability for the first time in almost a century. William and Mary had just ascended to the throne thanks to the Glorious Revolution and businesses were flourishing. However, public finances were weak and the monarchs needed help.

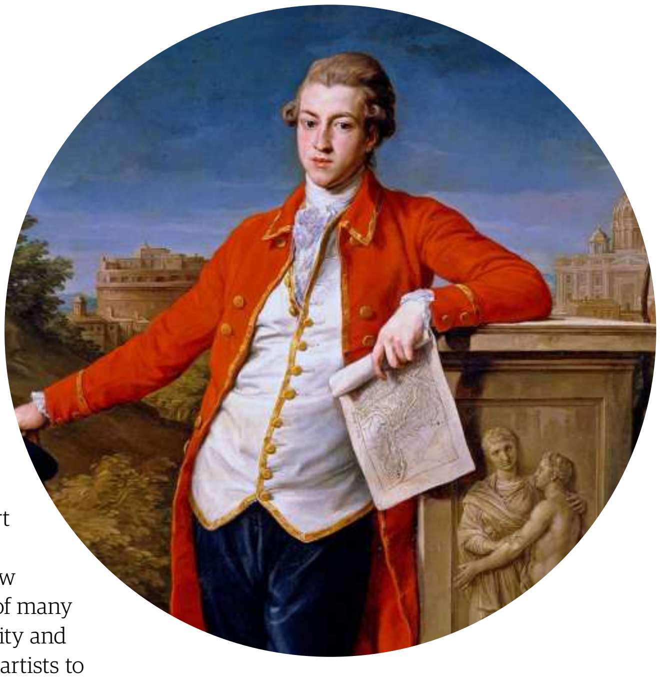
From the Jacobite Wars to a crushing defeat from France, William's expensive conflicts had completely drained the country's finances. William wanted England to be a global power, and in order to stop it being taken over by its stronger rivals, it needed a formidable navy. The public purse would not be able to fund this, so he needed a new plan.

Scottish entrepreneur William Paterson had an idea. He would invite private shareholders to invest money into a bank that would help finance government debt. For the shareholders, this meant that their companies would become part of the royal charter and only they would be allowed to issue banknotes and relend against the government debt. The proposition was an alluring one, as within 12 days the £1.2 million needed was raised, and half of that would go straight to rebuilding the navy and the nation's empire with it.

The physical bank itself would accept deposits, then issue banknotes that quickly became a widely accepted currency. The 'promise to pay' written on the notes can still be seen today, and there was little doubt this promise would be honoured. Soon these notes operated as a kind of 'virtual money' and the bank's monopoly on them is what helped it to gain and maintain its success.

> "Their companies would become part of the royal charter and only they would be allowed to issue banknotes"

Art and the creation of the Grand Tour



Despite the bloody periods of civil war, art and literature still managed to flourish under the Stuarts. The era started on a high with Shakespeare and his dark, brooding scenes at the height of their popularity while exclusive masques were held for the upper classes at the palace with elaborate scenery and lavish costumes.

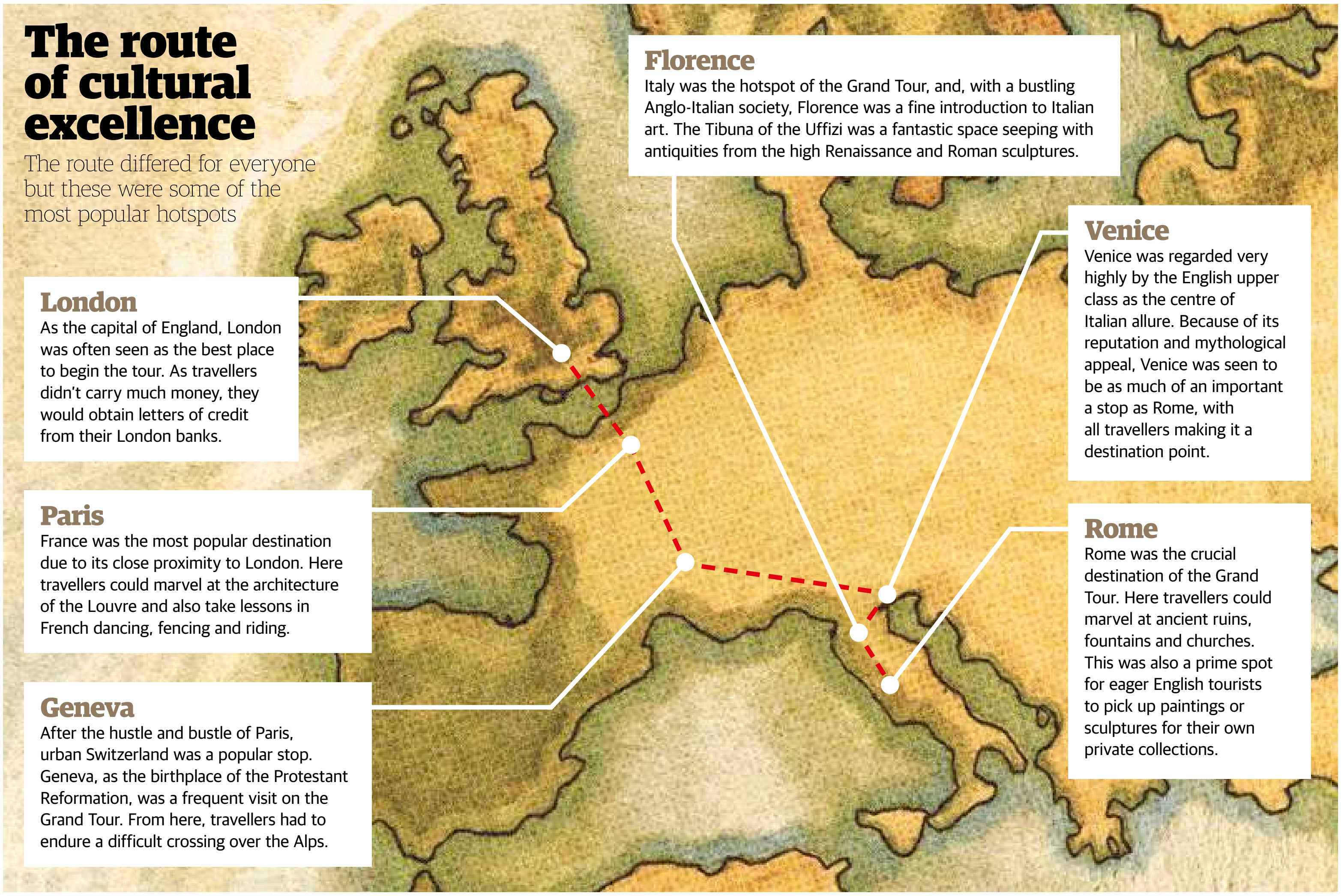
Charles I was a huge supporter of the arts, collecting paintings, sculptures and tapestries. His fondness for portraiture in particular ensured that many examples survive today, depicting the sumptuous fashions of the English court before civil war struck. Anthony van Dyck's paintings of the king were so remarkable that they had a great influence on portraiture for the next 150 years. Many of the nobility followed the lead of their king and amassed great collections of European art – however, Charles' huge collection was sold off after his execution and religious art was then deemed sacrilegious.

But this did little to quell the upper classes' love of art. By the end of the 17th century, this admiration for the different styles used across Europe inspired the creation of the Grand Tour, a trip traditionally taken by many upper-class young men around the age of 21. Regarded as a rite of passage for men (and occasionally ladies) of culture, it emphasises just how highly art was regarded.

This journey through Europe would allow the young to explore the cultural legacies of many different cities – especially classical antiquity and the Renaissance. While it allowed aspiring artists to study painting and sculpture techniques firsthand, for others it simply became a sign of status, and paintings of these young men, commissioned from local artists, posed among Roman antiquities became very popular.

Any gentleman who wished to be accepted and respected in English high society was expected to go on the Grand Tour, and it continued to be popular until the emergence of rail transport in the 1840s.

Painting was regarded as such a respectable profession that even women such as Joan Carlile and Mary Beale took it up. Other famous painters who made their mark in the Stuart era were William Dobson, one of the first notable English artists, and Francis Barlow, regarded as the father of British sporting painting and the nation's first wildlife painter. The Stuart period was an exciting and blossoming period for art that would only continue to grow in the following centuries.



The route of cultural excellence

The route differed for everyone but these were some of the most popular hotspots

London
As the capital of England, London was often seen as the best place to begin the tour. As travellers didn't carry much money, they would obtain letters of credit from their London banks.

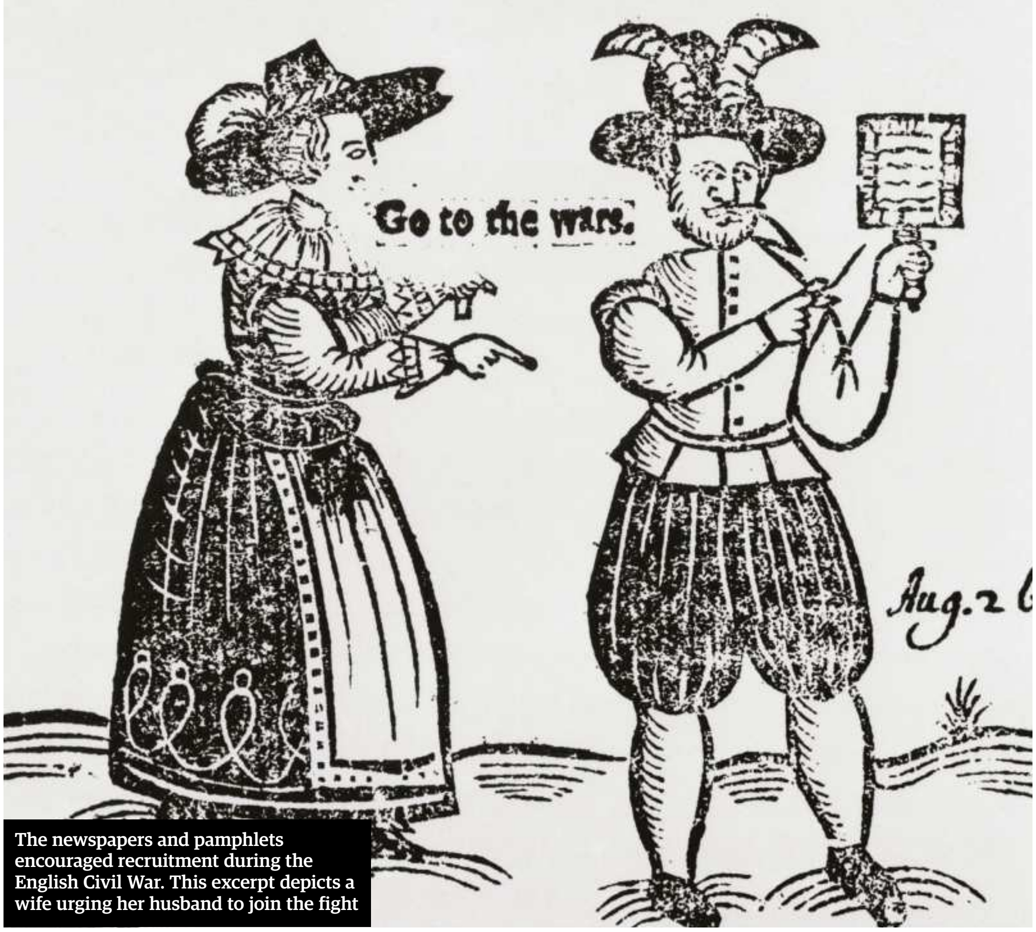
Paris
France was the most popular destination due to its close proximity to London. Here travellers could marvel at the architecture of the Louvre and also take lessons in French dancing, fencing and riding.

Geneva
After the hustle and bustle of Paris, urban Switzerland was a popular stop. Geneva, as the birthplace of the Protestant Reformation, was a frequent visit on the Grand Tour. From here, travellers had to endure a difficult crossing over the Alps.

Florence
Italy was the hotspot of the Grand Tour, and, with a bustling Anglo-Italian society, Florence was a fine introduction to Italian art. The Tibuna of the Uffizi was a fantastic space seeping with antiquities from the high Renaissance and Roman sculptures.

Venice
Venice was regarded very highly by the English upper class as the centre of Italian allure. Because of its reputation and mythological appeal, Venice was seen to be as much of an important a stop as Rome, with all travellers making it a destination point.

Rome
Rome was the crucial destination of the Grand Tour. Here travellers could marvel at ancient ruins, fountains and churches. This was also a prime spot for eager English tourists to pick up paintings or sculptures for their own private collections.



The newspapers and pamphlets encouraged recruitment during the English Civil War. This excerpt depicts a wife urging her husband to join the fight

Print, pamphlets and propaganda

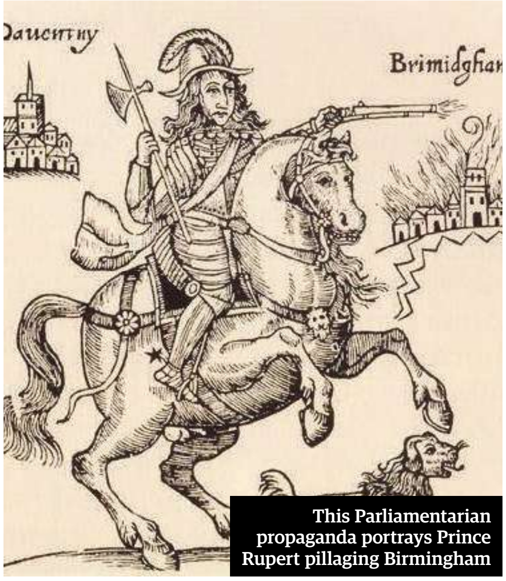
When the civil war of the 1640s tore England apart, it also changed the way in which war was reported. The conflict was the most heavily documented that England had ever seen but not all of the country's publications could be trusted to give reliable news.

Weekly serial newspapers and one-off pamphlets were written not to inform, but to persuade the public to align with whichever side was publishing them. The Parliamentarians had a huge advantage as they held London, the country's printing centre, and they used this to publish satirical cartoons that criticised the Royalist ideology.

The press was also used to conduct personal attacks, undermining the authority of royal commanders like Prince Rupert, who was accused of being a bloodthirsty foreigner. Much like today's press, the propaganda of the civil war leapt on people's established prejudices and appealed to them directly. The fear that foreigners were fighting for their own gain was a common one, and the Parliamentarians exploited and emphasised this to turn the public against their king.

The Royalists were initially sceptical about appealing to the common people for support but they soon realised just how important the free press had become. A Royalist newspaper, *Mercurius Aulicus*, was printed on a weekly basis and often appealed to the reader's religion, stating that the Parliamentarians wished to undermine the authority of the Church.

Through the use of stereotypes, the Parliamentarians became low-born rebels wishing to destroy the status quo and, in turn, Royalists became violent pillagers, eager to take what they could from the common folk. It is a testament to the strength of this early form of propaganda and free press that both these stereotypes, which were almost certainly untrue, survive today.



This Parliamentarian propaganda portrays Prince Rupert pillaging Birmingham

Saint Paul's Cathedral wasn't initially universally liked, with some describing it as "un-English"

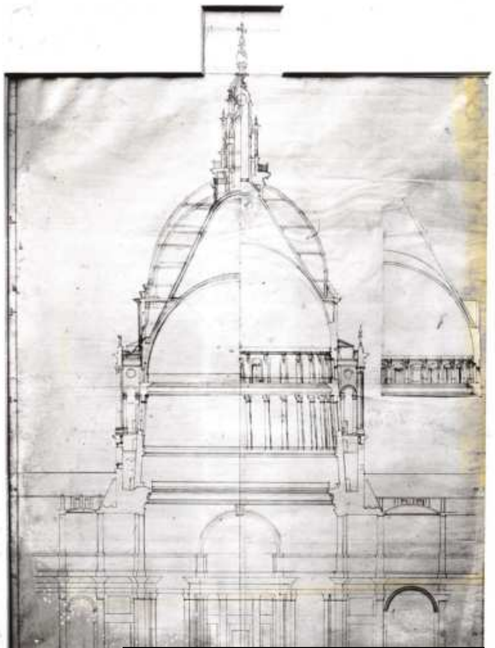
Architecture

The Elizabethan period is known for great, elaborate country manors, but the Stuart era went one step further, creating bigger, more detailed buildings than had ever been seen before. The Jacobean era in particular started off the 17th century with a bang.

Upon completion, the palace of Audley End was the largest private house in England – it was even bigger than royal residencies and prompted James I to quip that it was "too big for a king." Even modest dwellings were influenced by this style, with merchant town houses decorated with intricate plaster ceilings. The trend to build to elaborate excess produced some of the most detailed and fantastical buildings in the country but it also cost their builders severely and many projects left unfinished due to sapping all cash flow.

The civil war, however, saw many residencies partly destroyed and ransacked for free building materials. But the biggest destruction was caused by the Great Fire of London, which ruined so much of the city that it needed almost entirely rebuilding. Influenced by Charles II's fondness for French architecture, the new city was a blending of styles from Europe. This intriguing combination gave birth to some of the most famous and recognisable English buildings today, like Saint Paul's Cathedral.

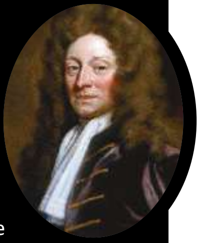
The later 17th century saw the emergence of English Baroque architecture. This was typified by elaborate decoration, curved shapes, strong lines and lots of rich colours. English Baroque was more understated than its European counterparts and some of the most notable examples of this today are Chatsworth House in the Peak District and Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire.



Sir Christopher Wren's plan for the new dome in Saint Paul's Cathedral

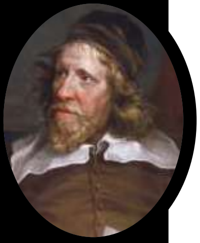
The leading 17th-century architects

Sir Christopher Wren



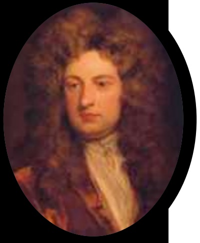
After the Great Fire of London, Sir Christopher Wren designed 52 new churches, including the famous Saint Paul's Cathedral. He was also responsible for the designs of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and the south front of Hampton Court Palace. He has become one of the most well-known and respected architects in history and his work on churches even achieved a very rare feat by influencing French architecture.

Inigo Jones



The son of a cloth worker, Inigo Jones rose to become one of the first notable English architects. Regarded as the first and greatest of the English Renaissance architects, he was responsible for building Queen's House, Greenwich, and Whitehall's Banqueting House. He also worked on the restoration of Saint Paul's Cathedral and created London's first square at Covent Garden. Today he is remembered for bringing classical Roman architecture and the Italian Renaissance to England.

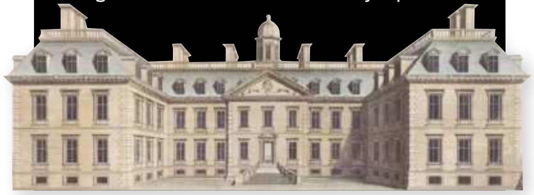
John Vanbrugh

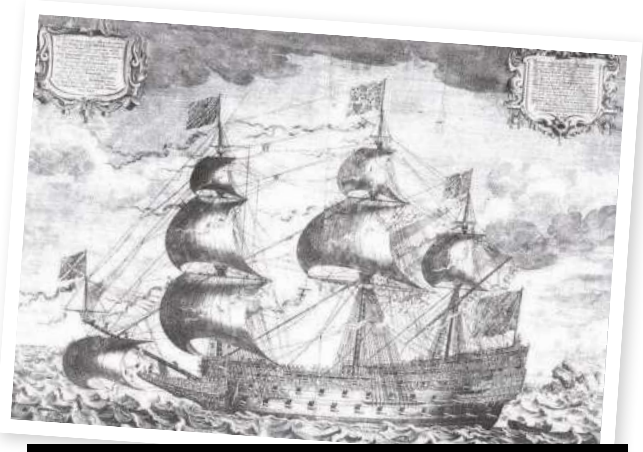


Despite coming to architecture late in life, John Vanbrugh made a very real impact on the English landscape almost immediately. His first real commission was to design the grand Baroque mansion at Castle Howard in Yorkshire. The staggering result made him a huge name in English architecture overnight and he went on to create Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire, a hugely elaborate building designed to shock and awe and regarded by many as the greatest showpiece house in Britain.

Roger Pratt

Despite his small number of completed works, Roger Pratt was knighted for his services. He became known for his designs of very 'English' country houses, and his most well-known structure was Clarendon House, below. The building didn't last long, but was seen as one of the first great classical houses in London. The design became iconic and was widely replicated.





Sovereign of the Seas was commissioned by Charles I, who desired a giant Great Ship. In his typical style, it was extravagantly decorated

The British Navy

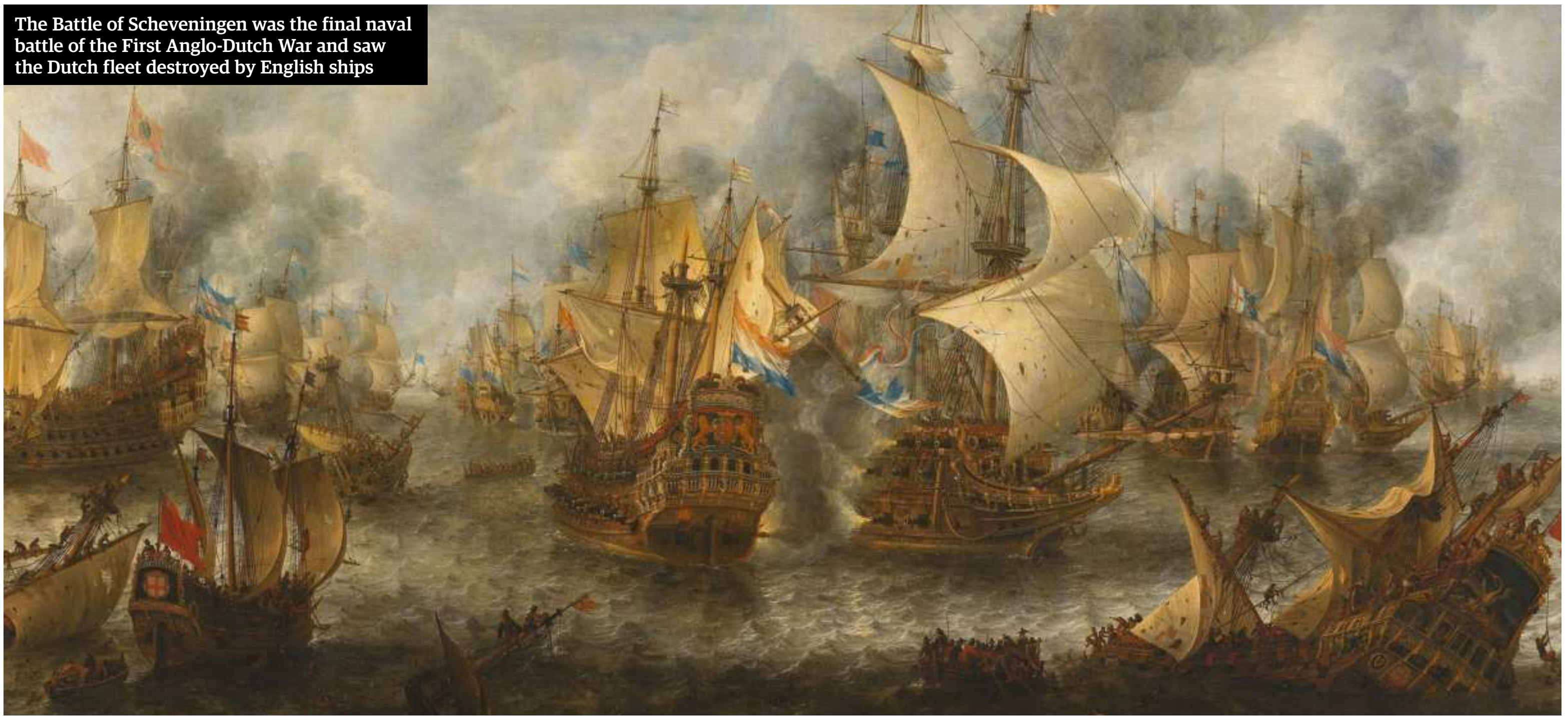
From the early Medieval period, English rulers used warships to conquer enemies, but the Royal Navy as we know it was not established until the Stuart era. The 16th century, with its naval battles and Spanish Armada, had proved how vital and important a strong naval power would be for any country that wished to be successful.

Charles I certainly recognised how crucial ships were to success and he underwent an intense programme of warship building. In fact, he did this with such gusto that his methods of financing, through the unpopular 'ship tax', contributed to the outbreak of the English Civil War. Unfortunately for Charles, the navy of 35 ships sided with Parliament.

As much as Parliament criticised Charles, it did agree that naval expansion was important, and even more so due to the enemies they had made with Charles I's execution. As such, the navy underwent rapid growth during the Commonwealth and the introduction of the Navigation Acts, which ruled that all merchant shipping to and from the colonies should be carried out by English ships, led to war with the Dutch Republic. Although England had a superior force, its naval tactics were not refined and early results were inconclusive. The navy were quick learners, though, and soon claimed a series of dramatic victories.

When Charles II returned with the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, he quickly re-established the navy and, instead of it being owned by the monarch, he turned it into a national institution, giving it the official title of the 'Royal Navy'. The force continued to grow and become more refined under Charles II's leadership. Despite the many losses during the Second Anglo-Dutch War, including a defeat that saw many of the navy's best ships destroyed, the force continued to learn, grow and become stronger.

The navy was certainly not an overnight success and it took these bitter defeats for England to learn and hone their skills. By the end of the 17th century, however, the country came to boast the strongest navy in the world, and one that would ensure supremacy of the seas for years to come.



The Battle of Scheveningen was the final naval battle of the First Anglo-Dutch War and saw the Dutch fleet destroyed by English ships

The battles that made the Royal Navy

The victories and defeats that created a force to be reckoned with

Battle of Portland

28 February – 2 March 1653

The Commonwealth fleet was attacked by Dutch forces moving through the English Channel. It was a hard-fought victory but the English finally managed to push back their foes and reclaim dominance. Although the First Anglo-Dutch war was far from over, this win was a chilling wake up for the Dutch that England was a foe to be reckoned with.

Raid on the Medway

19-24 June 1667

Dutch forces attacked English battleships, most of which were unmanned and unarmed, in Chatham Dockyard. Fortifications were pummeled with cannon fire, 13 vessels burned and two ships of the line towed away. It is regarded today as the worst defeat the Royal Navy has ever suffered on home waters and was a harshly taught lesson for England.

Battles of Barfleur and La Hogue

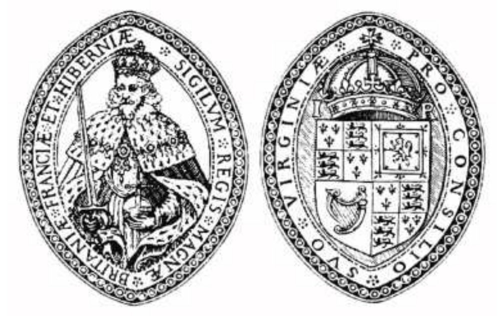
29 May – 4 June 1692

Taking place during the Nine Years' War, these battles saw 44 French ships try to invade England and put James II back on the throne. The resulting clash was fierce with losses on both sides but it ended in an English victory. Not only did this eliminate the threat of invasion, but it also ended France's brief superiority at sea, opening the waters for England to grasp control.

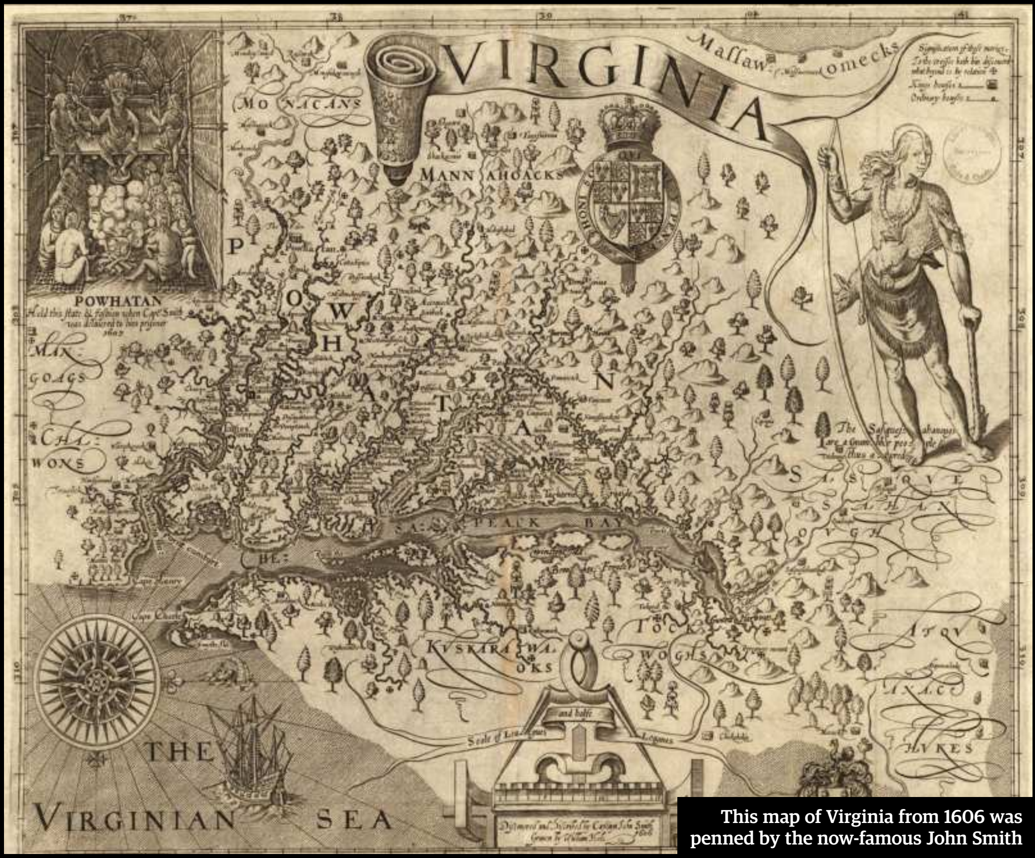
The first British Empire

England had been hoping to establish oversea colonies in North America since the Elizabethan era but wars with Spain had all but thwarted them. In 1604, however, James I signed the Treaty of London, ending hostilities with Spain, and England was finally able to create its first permanent settlement at Jamestown, Virginia. This was not an easy colonisation and almost all of the original settlers died from disease and starvation. However, more ships arrived and the region was secured.

The hard-won success at Jamestown was followed by the town of Williamsburg and 13 colonies were established along with islands like Jamaica and Barbados, which were lucrative for trade. Over the following years, England continued to expand overseas, planting the seeds for what would become the world's greatest empire.


SIGILLUM REGIS MAGNÆ BRITANNIÆ FRANCIÆ ET HIBERNIÆ
PRO CONSILIO SVO VIRGINIÆ

The London Company (later named Virginia Company) was created to establish colonial settlements in North America



This map of Virginia from 1606 was penned by the now-famous John Smith

> "This was not an easy colonisation and almost all of the original settlers died from disease and starvation"

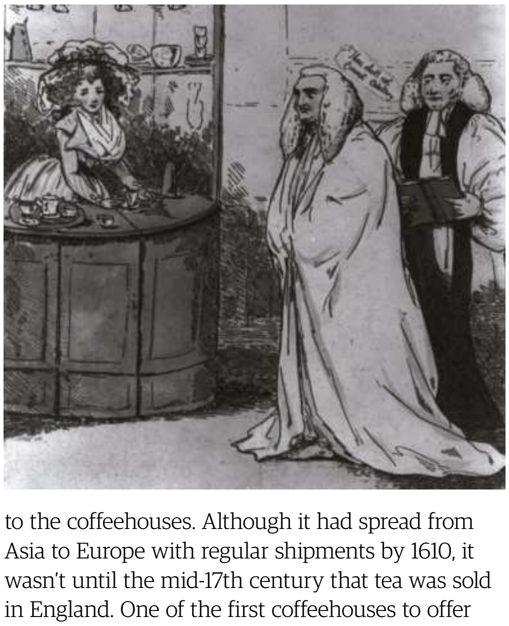
Tea and coffee

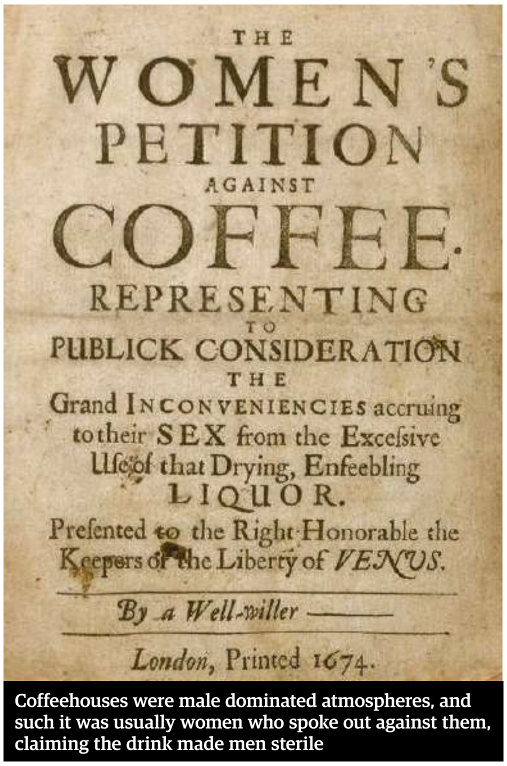
The drinks market in the 17th century was surprisingly competitive. There was a campaign by John Evelyn to promote and improve what he dubbed "the native English wine" – cider. However, he had a lot of new competition.

The most notable new drink on English shores was coffee. This unusual new beverage was first discovered and admired by travellers to Turkey and it soon invaded England in the 1650s. Although it was initially consumed for its medicinal properties, it soon became a firm favourite for casual drinking. This was helped in no small part by the emergence and popularity of coffeehouses.

Much like today's cafés, coffeehouses were places where professionals and merchants could meet and talk politics, read newspapers and generally gossip in a relatively private setting. They stood in stark difference to ale-houses as the absence of alcohol lent itself to more serious conversation. Coffeehouses became so popular that there were over 3,000 in England alone by 1675.

It may surprise some devoted tea-drinkers to find out that coffee actually preceded tea in England. In fact, the popularity of tea was linked very noticeably to the coffeehouses. Although it had spread from Asia to Europe with regular shipments by 1610, it wasn't until the mid-17th century that tea was sold in England. One of the first coffeehouses to offer tea was owned by Thomas Garway, who sold it both dry and in liquid form. It was advertised as "preserving perfect health until old age." The drink quickly became popular and by 1700, over 500 coffeehouses were selling it.





THE
WOMEN'S
PETITION
AGAINST
COFFEE.
REPRESENTING
TO
PUBLICK CONSIDERATION
THE
Grand INCONVENIENCIES accruing
to their SEX from the Exceſsive
Uſe of that Drying, Enfeebling
LIQUOR.
Preſented to the Right Honorable the
Keepers of the Liberty of VENUS.
By a Well-willer ——
London, Printed 1674.

Coffeehouses were male dominated atmospheres, and such it was usually women who spoke out against them, claiming the drink made men sterile

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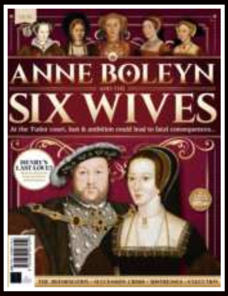
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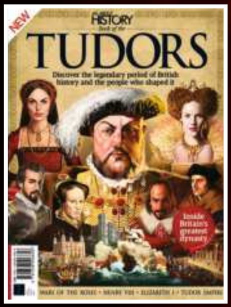
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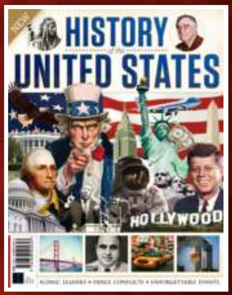
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